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**THE STORY OF A SUCCESS**

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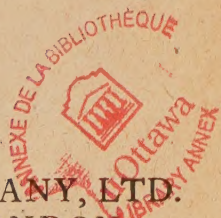
Irish Paper

# THE STORY OF A SUCCESS BY P. H. PEARSE

BEING A RECORD OF JAN 4 1909  
ST. ENDA'S COLLEGE  
SEPTEMBER 1908  
TO EASTER 1916

EDITED BY  
DESMOND RYAN, B.A.

MAUNSEL & COMPANY, LTD.  
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TO  
*CONOR MacGINLEY*



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## PREFACE

In these pages Mr. Pearse relates the essential history of St. Enda's College (Sgoil Eanna) from its foundation in September 1908 to Easter 1916. The reader seeking a detailed history of Sgoil Eanna in this slender volume will be disappointed. He will find only Mr. Pearse's hopes and ideals for his school, a short narrative of the gradual and sure fulfilment of those hopes and ideals amidst the unique environment, with which the personality of Pearse surrounded his pupils. It is proper here to explain the justification of this book, its necessary limitations and the significance of its title.

The justification of "The Story of a Success" is to be found in the following extract from Mr. Pearse's last instructions for the publication of his writings given in Arbour Hill Military Detention Barracks, Dublin, 1st May, 1916. "The notes in *An Macaomh*, under the heading 'By Way of Comment,' I have revised a set

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of these which will be found in the book-case already referred to. As revised, they form a continuous and more or less readable narrative of St. Enda's College from its foundation up to May 1913. I should like my friend and pupil, Desmond Ryan, to add an additional chapter describing the fortunes of St. Enda's since then, and the whole to be published as a book under his editorship."

The necessary limitations of this book are suggested in Mr. Pearse's words. Sgoil Eanna has been described as the bravest attempt to reform Irish education. It has stood for the regeneration of Irish education in an Irish spirit, and indicated the path along which Irish education must develop under any scheme of Irish government that may be in store for us. Not, as its founder often asserted, that every Irish school or college should be a replica of Sgoil Eanna, but every Irish school or college ought to be animated by a similarly lofty spiritual ideal, should declare its allegiance to Ireland in similarly unequivocal terms, and should claim and exercise the same liberty in shaping its own programme and determining its own internal

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organization. It has won the sincerest form of flattery and still continues to work upon its founder's lines. The limitations mentioned are briefly that no attempt has been made so far to compile a complete history of the college, inasmuch as Sgoil Eanna has gone back for a spell to Cullenswood House and the end is not yet; nor is it possible to give even all the available facts in one short chapter. Having added to the essentials, Mr. Pearse gives in his four chapters—the sources and application of his own high inspiration, and how through his vision and guidance his college became a pioneer college in Irish education—an account of how we fared from the date where his comments end, the claim that this is a narrative of the broad outline of the tale is justifiable and ample. And the title?

In no spirit of timid apology is the title "Success" given to this book. In his proudest hour P. H. Pearse would never have flinched from the word "failure." In this case the title is his own. In the autumn of 1912 he had saved Sgoil Eanna from the one serious financial crisis we ever had. Sheer force of will, enthusiasm

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and persuasiveness were his available assets. Shortly afterwards he told me he had planned to write a book about the school. "If I had failed," he continued, "I should have called it the story of a failure. Now some day I must write the story of a success." We who were his pupils and worked with him must continue to protest against the too prevalent and shallow judgment that condemns him as impracticable. Not to have known him as a teacher is not to have known him at all. The final tragedy is not the full story nor alone would it suffice to explain him. In Chapter III. his own conception of what constitutes the ethics of following an ideal irrespective of immediate gain or loss is expressed with a thoroughness that comment would only obscure. Sufficient to emphasize that the high spiritual outlook on life there expressed can be only questioned by ignoring something one meets in all religion, and sees behind all human devotion. Tragedy is a misleading word if that word conveys the sense of inevitable and final doom; the only tragedy in P. H. Pearse's case was the tragedy of the resolute and enthusiastic



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pursuit of a conviction. Pearse hoped for and won many victories in his lifetime. He was one of the remarkable men of his generation. The breath of life which crept into the dying bodies of once potent agitations, which entered into the moribund national consciousness of Ireland, which produced the revival of nationality we saw in the Irish-Ireland movement is best expressed in him. Before he grasped a physical sword he was killing himself by inches in his ardent and unflagging labours for Irish education. Before he became the marvellous orator of his later years, before his English prose writings showed the strength and fire of Mitchel and that strange austere beauty peculiarly his own, he had given Irish readers a series of penetrating glimpses into the inner life of the remote and self-contained communities that compose the Gaelthacht of the Western sea-board. As a writer, as an educationalist, as a political leader, he has graven deep upon his time. He was a man of stern stuff. When hope died within him he never abandoned his purpose or his convictions. No careful reader will dispute the aptness of the title

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he has chosen for his book. As literature these writings have already high rank. As a teacher's handbook one would have to travel far to find their equal. As autobiography they are of first importance, for here next to a fragment of early and unpublished autobiography, next to the glimpse of his more hidden and profound emotions he has left in the play "The Singer," and the poems *Suantraidhe agus Goltraidhe* remains the truest portrait of what manner of man was Pearse, who builded more than he destroyed, who found a simple joy in the quaintness of children, the bog, lake, and soaring hill of some peculiar Connacht scene, in God and home and Ireland, who perished as in the consuming fire which burns up all the compromises in the world.

DESMOND RYAN

*St. Enda's College, Dublin*  
*August 1917*

## I—BEGINNINGS





# THE STORY OF A SUCCESS

## I—BEGINNINGS

*Cullenswood House, June 1909.*

1/ *An Macaomh*, of which we hope to publish a number every Midsummer and another every Christmas, will record the fortunes of our adventure at Sgoil Eanna and supply us with the means of preserving in an accessible form the work, artistic and scholarly, done at the school. Its purpose will thus be wider than, and to some extent essentially different from, that of the ordinary school magazine. I mean not merely that it will be a genuine Review, educational and literary, rather than a glorified Prospectus, but that it will be a personal mouth-piece in a sense that is quite uncommon among kindred publications. It will form a vehicle for the expression of opinions which in their every detail are proper to myself, but in their general scope are fully shared in by all the friends associated with me in the work of Sgoil Eanna. We are

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not a religious community, but I do not think that any religious community can ever have been knit together by a truer oneness of purpose or by a finer comradeship than ours. It was the memory of this companionship in a year's pioneer work, very pleasant as I look back over it, that, I think, prompted the use of the word "adventure," a moment ago, rather than any feeling that our work has partaken of the nature of an experiment or that we are entitled to figure as heroes as having set our hands to something very difficult or very dangerous.

Some of my friends have been looking forward to *An Macaomh* for my story of how Sgoil Eanna came to be. There is very little to tell. Various high and patriotic motives have been assigned to me in the press and elsewhere. I am conscious of one motive only, namely, a love of boys, of their ways, of their society; and a desire to help as many boys as possible to become good men. To me a boy is the most interesting of all living things, and I have for years found myself coveting the privilege of being in a position to mould, or help to mould, the lives of boys to noble ends. In my

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sphere as journalist and University teacher, no opportunity for the exercise of such a privilege existed ; finally I decided to create my opportunity. I interested a few friends in the project of a school which should aim at the making of good men rather than of learned men, but of men truly learned rather than of persons qualified to pass examinations ; and as my definition of a good man, as applied to an Irishman, includes the being a good Irishman (for you cannot make an Irish boy a good Englishman or a good Frenchman) ; and as my definition of learning as applied to an Irishman, includes Irish learning as its basis and fundament, it followed that my school should be an Irish school in a sense not known or dreamt of in Ireland since the Flight of the Earls. This project, I say, appealed to two or three friends whose hearts were pat with mine ; and Sgoil Eanna is the result.

I feel very grateful when I remember how fortunate I have been in all the things that are most important to the success of such an undertaking as mine. I have been fortunate in the site which accident threw in my way ; I have been fortunate in the

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fellow-workers whom I have gathered about me ; I have been fortunate in my first band of pupils, seventy boys the memory of whose friendship will remain fresh and fragrant in my mind, however many generations of their successors may tread the class-rooms of Sgoil Eanna.

And first, it is a pleasant thing to be housed in one of the noble old Georgian mansions of Dublin, with an old garden full of fruit-trees under our windows, and a hedgerow of old elms, sycamores, and beeches as the distant boundary of our playing field. Cullenswood House has memories of its own. A hundred years ago it was the landmark in the district where two centuries previously the Wood of Cullen still sheltered Irish rebels. That Wood is famous in Dublin annals, for it is under its trees that the Irish, come down from the mountains, annihilated the Bristol colonists of Dublin on Easter Monday, 1209 ; whence Easter Monday was known in Dublin as Black Monday, and the fields on which our school-house looks down got their name of the Bloody Fields. A fresh colony came to Dublin from Bristol, and in 1316 the citizens



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took revenge for Black Monday by defeating a new ambushade of the O'Tooles in Cullenswood. But all that is an old story. In 1833 Cullenswood House was bought from Charles Joly, the then proprietor, by John Lecky, grandfather of the historian. John Lecky was succeeded by his eldest son, John Hartpoole Lecky; and John Hartpoole Lecky's son, William Edward Hartpoole Lecky, was born at Cullenswood House on March 26th, 1838. So our school-house has already a very worthy tradition of scholarship and devotion to Ireland; scholarship which even the most brilliant of our pupils will hardly emulate, devotion to Ireland, not indeed founded on so secure and right a basis as ours, but sincere, unwavering, lifelong.

It has been a pleasure, then, to work in Cullenswood House. It has been a greater pleasure to work with colleagues who are in the truest sense friends and comrades. And it is a still greater pleasure to be able to give the noble words "colleague" and "friend" and "comrade," an extension which will include pupils as well as masters in its scope. I who, throughout the year, have often

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enough been critical and exacting may here once and for all, let myself go in praise. It is very likely that by driving a little harder, by packing a little closer, we could have compressed more information into our boys' heads than we have actually done; but I do not think that we could by any possible means, or with any possible school staff, have gained a more willing and intelligent co-operation, or laid a sounder and more enduring basis for future work. I admit that our opportunities were unique. In no other school in Ireland can there be, in proportion to its size, so much of the stuff out of which men and nations are made. There is hardly a boy of all our seventy who does not come from a home which has traditions of work and sacrifice for Ireland, traditions of literary, scholarly or political service. If every boy in the Boy-Corps of Eamhain Macha was the son of a hero, nearly every boy in the Boy-Corps of Sgoil Eanna is the son or brother or nephew or cousin of some man or woman who is graving a mark in the history of contemporary Ireland. That in itself is a very splendid inspiration. It is much for a boy to start life with the con-

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scious knowledge, "I am the son of a good father."

Again, we have here the advantage of a unique appeal. We must be worthy of our fame as the most Irish of Irish schools. We must be worthy of Ireland. We must be worthy of the men and women whose names we bear. We must be worthy of the tradition we seek to recreate and perpetuate in Eire, the knightly tradition of the macradh of Eamhain Macha, dead at the Ford "in the beauty of their boyhood," the high tradition of Cuchulainn, "better is short life with honour than long life with dishonour," "I care not though I were to live but one day and one night, if only my fame and my deeds live after me;" the noble tradition of the Fianna, "we, the Fianna, never told a lie, falsehood was never imputed to us," "strength in our hands, truth on our lips, and cleanness in our hearts;" the Christ-like tradition of Colm Cille, "if I die, it shall be from the excess of the love I bear the Gael." It seems to me that with this appeal it will be an easy thing to teach Irish boys to be brave and unselfish, truthful, and pure; I am certain that no other appeal will

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so stir their hearts or kindle their imaginations to heroic things.

The value of the national factor in education would appear to rest chiefly in this, that it addresses itself to the most generous side of the child's nature, urging him to live up to his finest self. I think that the true work of the teacher may be said to be to induce the child to realize himself at his best and worthiest, and if this be so the factor of nationality is of prime importance apart from any ulterior propagandist views the teacher may cherish. Even if I were not a Gaelic Leaguer, committed to the service of a cause, it would still be my duty, from the purely pedagogic point of view, to make my school as Irish as a school can possibly be made.

What I mean by an Irish school is a school that takes Ireland for granted. You need not praise the Irish language—simply speak it; you need not denounce English games—play Irish ones; you need not ignore foreign history, foreign literatures—deal with them from the Irish point of view. An Irish school need no more be a purely Irish-speaking school than an Irish

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nation need be a purely Irish-speaking nation; but an Irish school, like an Irish nation, must be permeated through and through by Irish culture, the repository of which is the Irish language. I do not think that a purely Irish-speaking school is a thing to be desired; at all events, a purely Irish-speaking secondary or higher school is a thing that is no longer possible. Secondary education in these days surely implies the adding of some new culture, that is, of some new language with its literature, to the culture enshrined in the mother tongue; and the proper teaching of a new language always involves a certain amount of bilingualism—unless, indeed, we are to be content with construing from the new language into our own, a very poor accomplishment. The new language ought to become in some sense a second vernacular; so that it is not sufficient to speak it during the limited portion of the school-day that can be devoted to its teaching as a specific subject: it must be introduced during the ordinary work of the school as a teaching medium, side by side with the original vernacular. This argument justifies bilingualism as an educa-



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tional resource, always and everywhere; but in Ireland, where there are already two living<sup>1</sup> vernaculars, bilingualism is an educational necessity. Obviously, too, it is the one irresistible engine at the disposal of those who would restore Irish as a living medium of speech to the non-Irish-speaking three-fourths of the country.

Bilingualism in practice implies the teaching of the vernacular of the pupils; the teaching, in addition, of a second language and the gradual introduction of that second language as a medium of instruction in the ordinary curriculum, with the proviso, however, that any further languages taught be taught always on the direct method. This is the bilingualism I have been advocating in *An Claidheamh Soluis* for the past six years; this is the bilingualism of Sgoil Eanna.

It must be remembered that bilingualism, as thus explained, requires, as indeed any sane teaching scheme must require, that the very earliest steps of a child's education be taken in the language of the child's home. In Connemara, and parts of Tirconnell and Mayo and Kerry and Waterford, that lan-

guage is Irish: in Dublin it is English. When I was in Belgium I observed that most of the teachers delayed the introduction of the second language until the second school year was reached; at Sgoil Eanna we introduce it right on the first day, but in homœopathic doses, and so pleasantly presented as to appear always as a pastime to be enjoyed and never as a task to be learned. In the infant stage, little use can be made of the new language as a teaching medium; but as soon as the names of ordinary objects and qualities and the manner of predicating one thing to another have been learned, the bilingual principle comes into play.

To be concrete, at Sgoil Eanna, every child is taught Irish. Of thirty in the Infants' and Junior Division only one child uses Irish as a vernacular, so that English is necessarily the basis of the elementary instruction; but Irish has been taught even to the youngest mites since the first day the School opened, is used freely in the school-room, and is cautiously employed in giving instruction in such subjects as Arithmetic, Nature-Study, and Physical Drill. In the Senior School, the instruction throughout

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(with the exception of that in Higher Mathematics, and Mathematical Science, where English must necessarily predominate until we have Irish text-books and a recognized body of technical terms) is fully bilingual. That is to say, Irish, English and other modern languages are taught, each through the medium of itself; subjects other than modern languages are taught through the medium both of Irish and English. As regards procedure, occasionally a lesson is given in Irish only or in English only; but the rule is, whether the subject be Christian Doctrine or Algebra, Nature-Study or Latin, to teach the lesson first in Irish and then repeat it in English, or vice-versa. In such subjects as Dancing and Physical Drill English can practically be dispensed with. As the general medium of communication between masters and pupils in the schoolroom Irish is the more commonly used of the two vernaculars.

This system has been at work since September last. We have yet to perfect it in many of its details, but it is not likely that we shall ever find it necessary to modify many of its principles. Already it has

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justified itself by its results. Boys who came to us on September 8th wholly ignorant that such a language existed, have now a good working command of Irish conversation, and can easily follow a lesson in Algebra or in Euclid conducted in Irish. At the same time I believe we have taught English and French (especially on the conversational side), Latin and Greek, Physical Science and Mathematics, at least as well as they are taught in any of the unilingual schools, while we have added a whole phase of work in History, Geography, and Nature-Study, to which there is no parallel in the curriculum of any school in Ireland.

I mentioned at the commencement that our boys now number seventy. It has been very pleasant to watch the steady accessions to the little band of forty that mustered on the first morning. We started with four classrooms, but had to add a fifth, a larger one than any except the main one, before the year was half-way through. Even the space thus secured is too small for our growing numbers. We have in hands a building scheme which includes the erection of an Aula Maxima for purposes of general

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assembly, of a Physical and Chemical Laboratory, and of a new Refectory (for we propose to convert our present Refectory, the fine old dining-room of Cullenswood House, into a Library). We are also anxious to build a School Chapel, in order that we may have the great privilege of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in our midst, and of daily Mass within our own walls. How much of this scheme we shall be able to carry out before our boys return in September is a matter which is at present exercising my mind. Sometimes I wish that a millionaire would endow us with a princely foundation, and sometimes I feel that it is better to build up things slowly and toilsomely ourselves.

Our first attempt at the presentation of plays was at our St. Enda's Day celebration on March 20th, 21st, and 22nd last, when in the School Gymnasium, converted for the occasion into a beautiful little theatre, our boys performed An Craoibhin's "An Naomh ar Iarraidh" and Mr. Standish O'Grady's "The Coming of Fionn." We had an audience of over a hundred each evening, our guests on the third evening



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including Sir John Rhys, Mr. Eoin MacNeill, Mr. W. B. Yeats, Mr. Stephen Gwynn, and Mr. Padraic Colum. All these, especially Mr. Yeats, were very generous in their praise of our lads, who, I hope, will not be spoiled by the tributes they received from such distinguished men. The Press notices, too, were very kindly. The *Irish Independent* and the *London Sphere* published photographs. The *Freeman's Journal* dwelt on the beautiful speaking of the actors, which, it said, had none of the stiffness and crudeness usually characteristic of schoolboy elocution. Mr. D. P. Moran wrote in the *Leader*: "There was a prologue to each piece, and both were excellently spoken. Dr. Hyde's little play, 'An Naomh ar Iarraidh,' was well done, and particularly well staged. 'The Coming of Fionn' was likewise a striking performance. We are not enamoured much of the cult of words on the stage that has to fight for existence in the world, but words and their delivery are all-important in school-plays. The players in 'The Coming of Fionn' spoke their words excellently, and half the pleasure of a pleasant performance was the

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distinct and measured declamation. Indeed, we can write with enthusiasm—though some cynical people don't think we have any—of the plays at Sgoil Eanna. The stage and costumes emanated from the school, and the costumes were striking. . . .” In the *Nation* Mr. W. P. Ryan wrote: “The whole environment and atmosphere were delightful, but the human interest aroused by the boys is what remains kindest in the memory. Boys as players are often awkward, ill at ease, and unnatural, as if they could not take kindly to the make-believe. The boys in the Sgoil Eanna plays for the most part were serenely and royally at home. An Craoibhin's delicate and tender little drama was delicately and tenderly interpreted; it had a religious sense and atmosphere about it, and the miracle seemed fitting and natural. In the ‘Coming of Fionn’ one could easily lose sight of the fact that it was dramatic representation; the boys for a time were a part of the heroic antiquity; dressed in the way they were, and intense and interested as they were, one could picture them in Tara or Eamhain without much straining of the imagination.

The heroic spirit had entered into their hearts and their minds, and one realized very early indeed that the evening's life and spirit were not something isolated, a phase and charm to be dropped when they reappeared in ordinary garb. The evening's sense was a natural continuation of that and many other evenings and days when the spirit of Fionn and his heroic comrades had been instilled into their minds by those for whom the noble old-time love had a vivid and ever-active and effective meaning. Fionn and Cuchulainn and their high-heroic kin had become part of the mental life of the teachers and the taught. With much modern culture they had imbibed things of dateless age, things that time had tested and found perennially human and alive." And Mr. Padraic Colm wrote in *Sinn Féin*: "The performance of 'An Naomh ar Iarraidh' gave one the impression that the play could never be better produced. It is out of the heart of childhood, and it has the child's tears, the child's faith, the child's revelation. In this performance there was a delight that must always be wanting in the great art of the theatre; the child actors brought in no

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conscious, no distracting personality. It was like the enacting of one of the religious songs of Connacht. It was Gaelic from the beautiful traditional hymn sung at the opening to the prayer that closes the play. Standish O'Grady's masque is really for the open air. The scene is nominally a hut, but the speeches and sentiments demand spaciousness; the plain with forest for a background. After childhood with its inner life, here was youth with its pride in conquest and deliverance. The language of 'The Coming of Fionn' is noble, but it is not quite dramatic speech. In the production there was no professionalism, no elaborate illusion. It was one with all noble art, because it came out of a comradeship of interest and inspiration; the art was here not rootless, it came out of belief, work and aspiration."

In the notes which I prefixed to the programme of the plays I said that our plans included the enacting of a Pageant in the early summer and of a Miracle Play at Christmas. The early summer has come, and with it our Pageant. It deals with Boy-Deeds of Cuchulainn, I have extracted

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the story and a great part of the dialogue from the Táin, merely modernising (but altering as little as possible) the magnificent phrase of the epic. I have kept close to the Táin even at the risk of missing what some people might call dramatic effect, but in this matter I have greater trust in the instinct of the unknown shapers of our epic than in the instinct of any modern. I claim for my version one merit which I claim also for my episode of the Boy-Deeds in the Táin, namely, that it does not contain a single unnecessary speech, a single unnecessary word. If Conall Cearnach and Laoghaire Buadhach are silent figures in our Pageant, it is because they stand silent in the tale of events as told by the Ulster exiles over the camp-fire of Meadhbh and Aileall. For Feargus I invent two or three short speeches, but the only important departure (and these have a sufficiently obvious purpose) from the narrative of the Táin are in making Cuchulainn's demand for arms take place on the playgreen of Eamhain Macha rather than in Conchobar's sleeping-house, and in assigning to the Watchman the part played by Leabharcham



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in the epic. For everything else I have authority. Even the names of the boy-corps are not all fanciful, for around Follamhan, son of Conchobar (he who was to perish at the head of the macradh in the Ford of Slaughter) I group on the playground of Eamhain the sons of Uisneach, of Feargus, and of Conall Cearnach, boys who must have been Cuchulainn's contemporaries in the boy-corps, though older than he. On how many of those radiant figures were dark fates to close in as the tragedy of Ulster unrolled !

The Chorus and the Song of the Sword have been set to music by Mr. MacDonnell, the latter to an arrangement of the well-known Smith song in the Petrie Collection, the former to an original air. I feel this music gives dignity to very common-place words. My friend Tadhg O Donnchadha has kindly checked over the verses in bad Rannaigheacht Bheag which I put into the mouths of the Chorus. Obligations of another sort I owe to my brother, who is responsible for the costumes, grouping and general production of the Pageant, and to my nephew, Mr. Alfred McGloughlin, for

help in the same and other directions. Mr. McGloughlin's name does not figure among the School Staff, but he might truly be called a member of the Staff without Portfolio. He is at our service whenever we want anything done which requires artistic insight and plastic dexterity of hand, be it the making of plans for an Aula Maxima or the construction of a chariot for Cuchulainn.

It may be wondered why we have undertaken the comparatively ambitious project of a Cuchulainn Pageant so early in our career, so soon, too, after our St. Enda's Day Celebration. The reason is that we were anxious to crown our first year's work with something worthy and symbolic; anxious to send our boys home with the knightly image of Cuchulainn in their hearts, and his knightly words ringing in their ears. They will leave St. Enda's under the spell of the magic of their most beloved hero, the Macaomh who is, after all, the greatest figure in the epic of their country, indeed, as I think, the greatest in the epic of the world. Whether the Pageant will be an entire success I cannot

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venture to prophesy, but I feel sure that our boys will do their best and that, if they do not render full justice to the great story, at least they will not spoil it. I feel sure, too, that Eamonn Bulfin will be duly beautiful and awful as Cathbhadh the Druid; that Denis Gwynn will be gallant and noble as Conchobar Mac Neasa, Conchobar, young and gracious, as yet unstained by the blood of the children of Uisneach; and that Frank Dowling will realise, in face and figure and manner, my own high ideal of the child, Cuchulainn; that, "small, dark, sad boy, comeliest of the boys of Eire," shy and modest in a boy's winning way, with a boy's aloofness and a boy's mystery, with a boy's grave earnestness broken ever and anon by a boy's irresponsible gaiety; a boy merely to all who looked upon him, and unsuspected for a hero save in his strange moments of exaltation, when the seven-fold splendours blazed in his eyes and the hero-light shone above his head.

## II—STRIVINGS



## II—STRIVINGS

*Cullenswood House, December 1909.*

During the past six or seven years I have grown so accustomed to having an organ at my disposal for the expression of my views and whims that I have come to look on an organ, as some men look on tobacco and others on motor-cars and aeroplanes, as among the necessities of life. Use is a second nature, and the growing complexity of civilization adds daily to the list of indispensable things. I have a friend who wonders how I manage to exist without a Theatre of my own to "potter about" (being a poet in his public capacity he relaxes by being slangy in conversation), and another who marvels that I find the running of a School more interesting than the running of a Palæstrina Choir. But Providence gives each of us his strength and his weakness, his wisdom and his folly, his likes and his wants as different one's from the other's as the markings on the palms of our



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hands. I have never felt the need of tobacco or of an aeroplane (I am sure that both one and the other would make me dizzy), but I do find the possession of a School and of an organ necessary at once to my happiness and to my usefulness; a School for bringing me into contact with the wisdom of children, and an organ for the purpose of disseminating the glad and noble things I learn from that contact. Whether those to whom I preach will place the same value on my preaching as I do myself is another question: enough for me that my tidings are spoken, let the winds of the world blow them where they list.

It will thus be understood that it is a fortunate thing for me, if not for the public, that I founded *An Macaomh* before I descended from the bad eminence of the editorship of *An Claidheamh Soluis*. I have still my organ; and it is a luxury to feel that I can set down here any truth, however obvious, without being called a liar, any piece of wisdom, however sane, without being docketed a lunatic. *An Macaomh* is my own, to do as I please; and if through sheer obstinacy in saying in it what I think

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ought to be said, I run it against some obstruction and so wreck it, at least I shall enjoy something of the grim satisfaction which I suppose motorists experience in wrecking their thousand guinea Panhards through driving them as they think they ought to be driven.

A slight change in the sub-title of *An Macaomh* hints at a slight, a very slight, widening of its scope. The Review will remain identified with our adventure at Sgoil Eanna as long as the two endure, but I think it will become less and less of a school magazine (at least in the accepted sense) as time goes on. My hope is that it will come to be regarded as the rallying-point for the thought and aspirations of all those who would bring back again in Ireland that Heroic Age which reserved its highest honour for the hero who had the most childlike heart, for the king who had the largest pity, and for the poet who visioned the truest image of beauty. I think I shall be able to give *An Macaomh* this significance without departing from my original intention of admitting to its pages the work only of those who are in some

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way associated with Sgoil Eanna. Nearly everyone whose name stands for high thought or achievement in any sphere of wholesome endeavour will in his turn address our boys in their study Hall; and these addresses will find a place in *An Macaomh* along with the work of the masters and pupils. It may be that the most precious boon enjoyed by the boys of St. E da's is the way they thus come in personal touch with the men and women who are thinking the highest thoughts and doing the highest deeds in Ireland to-day.

Philosophy is as old as the hills, and the science of to-day is only a new flowering of the science that made lovely the ancient cities and gardens of the East. With all our learning we are not yet as cultured as were the Greeks who crowded to hear the plays of Sophocles; with all our art institutions we have not yet that love for the beautiful which burned in the heart of the middle ages. All the problems with which we strive were long ago solved by our ancestors, only their solutions have been forgotten. Take the problem of education, that is the problem of bringing up a child.

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We constantly speak and write as if a philosophy of education were first formulated in our own time. But all the wise peoples of old, faced and solved that problem for themselves, and most of their solutions were better than ours. Professor Culverwell thinks that the Jews gave it the best solution. For my part, I salute the old Irish. The philosophy of education is preached now, but it was practised by the founders of the Gaelic system two thousand years ago. Their very names for "education" and "teacher" and "pupil" show that they had gripped the heart of the problem. The word for "education" among the old Gael was the same as the word for "fostering;" the teacher was a "fosterer" and the pupil was a "foster-child." Now to "foster" is exactly the function of a teacher: not primarily to "lead up," to "guide," to "conduct through a course of studies," and still less to "indoctrinate" to "inform," to "prepare for exams," but primarily to "foster" the elements of character already present. I put this in another way in the first number of *An Macaomh* when I wrote that the true

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work of the teacher may be said to be, to help the child to realize himself at his best and worthiest. One does not want to make each of one's pupils a replica of oneself (God forbid), holding the self-same opinions, prejudices, likes, illusions. Neither does one want to drill all one's pupils into so many regulation little soldiers or so many stodgy little citizens, though this is apparently the aim of some of the most cried-up of modern systems. In point of fact, man is not primarily a member of a State, but a human individuality—that is, a human soul imprisoned in a human body; a shivering human soul with its own awful problems, its own august destiny, lonelier in its house of clay than any prisoner in any Bastille in the world. The true teacher will recognise in each of his pupils an individual human soul, distinct and different from every other human soul that has ever been fashioned by God, miles and miles apart from the soul that is nearest and most akin to it, craving, indeed, comradeship and sympathy and pity, needing also, it may be, discipline and guidance and a restraining hand, but imperiously demanding to be

allowed to live its own life, to be allowed to bring itself to its own perfection; because for every soul there is a perfection meant for it alone, and which it alone is capable of attaining. So the primary office of the teacher is to "foster" that of good which is native in the soul of his pupil, striving to bring its inborn excellences to ripeness rather than to implant in it excellences exotic to its nature. It comes to this, then, that the education of a child is greatly a matter, in the first place, of congenial environment and, next to this, of a wise and loving watchfulness whose chief appeal will be to the finest instincts of the child itself.

It is a long time since I was first attracted by the Gaelic plan of educating children. One of my oldest recollections is of a kindly grey-haired seanchaidhe, a woman of my mother's people, telling tales by the kitchen fireplace. She spoke more wisely and nobly of ancient heroic things than anyone else I have ever known. Her only object was to amuse me, yet she was the truest of all my teachers. One of her tales was of a king, the most famous king of his time in Ireland,



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who had gathered about him a number of boys, the children of his friends and kinsmen, whom he had organized into a little society, giving them a constitution and allowing them to make their own laws and elect their own leaders. The most renowned of the king's heroes were appointed to teach them chivalry, the most skilled of his men of art to teach them arts, the wisest of his druids to teach them philosophy. The king himself was one of their teachers, and so did he love their companionship that he devoted one-third of all the time he saved from affairs of state to teaching them or watching them at play; and if any stranger came to the dun during that time, even though he were a king's envoy demanding audience, there was but one answer to him: "the king is with his foster-children." This was my first glimpse of the Boy-Corps of Eamhain-Macha, and the picture has remained in my heart.

In truth, I think that the old Irish plan of education, as idealised for boys in the story of the Macradh of Eamhain and for girls in that of the Grianan of Lusga, was the wisest and most generous that the world

has ever known. The bringing together of children in some pleasant place under the fosterage of some man famous among his people for his greatness of heart, for his wisdom, for his skill in some gracious craft—here we get the two things on which I lay most stress in education, the environment, and the stimulus of a personality which can address itself to the child's worthiest self. Then, the character of free government within certain limits, the right to make laws and maintain them, to elect and depose leaders—here was scope for the growth of individualities yet provision for maintaining the suzerainty of the common weal; the scrupulous co-relation of moral, intellectual, and physical training, the open-air life, the very type of the games which formed so large a part of their learning—all these things were designed with a largeness of view foreign to the little minds that devise our modern makeshifts for education. Lastly, the "aite," fosterer, or teacher, had as colleagues in his work of fosterage no ordinary hirelings, but men whom their gifts of soul, or mind, or body, had lifted high above their contemporaries—

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the captains, the poets, the prophets of the people.

As the Boy-Corps of Eamhain stands out as the idealization of the system, Cuchulainn stands out as the idealization of the child fostered under the system. And thus Cuchulainn describes his fostering: "Fionnchaomh nourished me at her breast; Feargus bore me on his knee; Conall was my companion-in-arms; Blai, the lord of lands, was my hospitaller; fair-speeched Seancha trained me in just judgment; on the knee of Amhairgin the poet I learned poetry; Cathbhadh of the gentle face taught me druid lore; Conchobar kindled my boyish ambition. All the chariot-chiefs and kings and poets of Ulster have taken part in my bringing up." Such was the education of Cuchulainn, the most perfect hero of the Gael. Cuchulainn may never have lived, and there may never have been a Boy-Corps at Eamhain; but the picture endures as the Gael's idealization of the kind of environment and the kind of fostering which go to the making of a perfect hero. The result of it all, the simplicity and the strength of true heroism, is compressed into a single

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sentence put into the mouth of the hero by the old shaper of the tale of Cuchulainn's Phantom Chariot: "I was a child with children; I was a man with men."

Civilization has taken such a queer turn that it might not be easy to restore the old Irish plan of education in all its details. Our heroes and seers and scholars would not be so willing to add a Boy-Corps or a Grianán to their establishments as were their prototypes in Ireland from time immemorial till the fall of the Gaelic polity. I can imagine how blue Dr. Hyde, Mr. Yeats, and Mr. MacNeill would look if their friends informed them that they were about to send them their children to be fostered. But, at least, we can bring the heroes and seers and scholars to the schools (as we do at Sgoil Eanna) and get them to talk to the children; and we can rise up against the system which tolerates as teachers the rejected of all other professions, rather than demanding for so priestlike an office the highest souls and the noblest intellects of the race. I think, too, that the little child-republics I have described, with their own laws and their own leaders, their life face to

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face with nature, their care for the body as well as for the mind, their fostering of individualities yet never at the expense of the commonwealth, ought to be taken as models for all our modern schools. But I must not be misunderstood. In pleading for an attractive school-life, I do not plead for making school-life one long grand picnic: I have no sympathy with sentimentalists who hold that we should surround children with an artificial happiness, shutting out from their ken pain and sorrow and retribution and the world's law of unending strife. the key-note of the school-life I desiderate is *effort* on the part of the child itself, struggle, self-sacrifice, self-discipline, for by these only does the soul rise to perfection. I believe in gentleness, but not in softness. I would not place too heavy a burden on young shoulders, but I would see that no one, boy or man, shirk the burden he is strong enough to bear.

As for the progress of things at Sgo Eanna, our Boy-Corps now numbers just a hundred, which is two-thirds the muster of the Boy-Corps of Eamhain. When we reach Eamhain's thrice fifty I think we shall stop.

I do not know that any man ought to make himself responsible for the education of multitudes of children ; at any rate, to get to *know* a hundred and fifty boys as a master ought to know his pupils is a task that I feel sufficiently big for myself at present. The work is fascinating. One's life in a school is a perpetual adventure, an adventure among souls and minds ; each child is a mystery, and if the plucking out of the heart of so many mysteries is fraught with much labour and anxiety, there are compensations richer than have ever rewarded any voyagers among treasure-islands in tropic seas.

In the Midsummer number of *An Macaomh* I threw out a modest hint to millionaires that Sgoil Eanna was in need of an endowment. I am afraid no millionaires read *An Macaomh*. Of the wealthy people who do read it none of them took my hint. I begin to fear that it is only poor men who are generous. Or, perhaps, the explanation is that wealth and ideas do not consort. At any rate, except that one kind friend has undertaken to provide us with a School Chapel, we have been left the proud



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privilege of carrying out our new building scheme unaided. We have now our Study Hall, built to hold thrice fifty with room and verge to spare; our Art Room; our Physico-Chemical Laboratory; a new Refectory, the old Refectory having been converted into a Library (where we have already two thousand volumes); and a new Museum. I do not know that we need much else in the way of accommodation or equipment for teaching, except, perhaps, a special room for Manual Instruction. That will, doubtless, come in good time. We have a way of getting things done here, and are commencing to eliminate the word "impossible" from our vocabulary.

The original Prospectus of Sgoil Eanna announced that where the parents so desired pupils of the School would be prepared for the examinations of the Board of Intermediate Education. Nevertheless, having no guarantee that we would receive any credit for our direct method teaching of languages or for our bilingual methods of instruction in other subjects, we decided last year with the concurrence of the parents of our boys, to hold aloof from the Inter-

mediate. The establishment of a system of oral inspection by the Intermediate Board has brought about a new state of affairs which makes it possible for us to avail of the Board's grants, without sacrificing any of our principles. We have not converted the School into an Intermediate School pure and simple, but we are prepared to fulfil the announcement in our first Prospectus, that is to say, to send forward for the examinations of the Intermediate Board such boys as we think its programme suits, always pre-supposing the willingness of the parents. The only change in our method of working which this entails is that towards the end of the year we shall have to devote a few weeks translating the prescribed language texts into English : for the rest, all our language teaching will be done on the direct method. Our classes in Physics and Chemistry have been placed under the inspection of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction : here unfortunately, English must reign until Irish evolves a body of technical terms in these subjects. This cannot be done in a day or a year. As a preliminary we want Irish-speaking

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students to study Physical Science and then to write text-books. I would advise the Gaelic League to interest itself in the training of Irish speakers as Science Teachers. To an advertisement last year for a Science Master "with a knowledge of Irish," I received no reply; to an advertisement making no stipulation with regard to Irish I received forty. The explanation is not far to seek. The fact that Irish does not form part of the essential basis of education in Ireland, not being essential for entrance to the Universities\* and hence not essential in the secondary schools, means of course that students who intend to specialize in Science neglect Irish as unnecessary to their purpose.

Nothing has given me greater pleasure during the past session than to watch Sgoil Eanna developing as it has been doing on the athletic side. Our boys must now be amongst the best hurlers and footballers in Ireland. Wellington is credited with the dictum that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton. I am certain

\*Since above was written, Irish has been made compulsory for Matriculation in the National University.

that when it comes to a question of Ireland winning battles, her main reliance must be on her hurlers. To your camáns, O boys of Banba !

The first number of *An Macaomh* appeared on the eve of our Cuchulainn Pageant and the Distribution of Prizes. The Pageant was a large undertaking, but we seem to have satisfied everyone except ourselves. We had over five hundred guests in our playing-field, including most of the people in Dublin who are interested in art and literature. I think the boyish freshness of our miniature Macradh, and especially the shy and comely grace of Frank Dowling as Cuchulainn, really pleased them. Mr. Colum wrote very generously of us in *Sinn Féin*, Mr. Ryan in the *Irish Nation*, and Mr. Bulfin in *An Claidheamh Soluis*. The *Freeman's Journal*, in addition to giving a special report, honoured us with a leading article from the pen of Mr. Stephen MacKenna.

Mr. MacNeill distributed the prizes, and he, Mr. Bulfin, and Dr. Henry addressed the boys and our guests. I have a grievance against the reporters for leaving before the

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speeches. They were only speeches at a school fête, but they contained things that were better worth recording than all the news that was in the newspapers the next day. I did not go beyond what I felt when, in tendering the speakers the thanks of the masters and the boys, I said that our year's work would have been sufficiently rewarded if it had received no other recompense than the high and noble things Mr. MacNeill had just spoken in praise of it.

Our plays this year will take place somewhere between St. Brigid's Day and the beginning of Lent. They will consist of a Heroic Play in English and a Miracle Play in Irish. Mr. Colum is writing the English Play for us: its subject is the doom of Conaire Mór at Bruidhean Da Dearga. The Miracle Play will probably be the dramatized version of "Iosagán" which I print in this number of *An Macaomh*.

In writing the Cuchulainn Pageant I religiously followed the phraseology of the Tain. In "Iosagán" I have as religiously followed the phraseology of the children and old men in Iar-Connacht from whom I have learned the Irish I speak. I have put

no word, no speech, into the mouths of my little boys which the real little boys of the parish I have in mind—boys whom I know as well as my pupils at Sgoil Eanna—would not use in the same circumstances. I have given their daily conversation, anglicisms, “vulgarisms,” and all: if I gave anything else my picture would be a false one.

The story which I now dramatize has been described by an able but eccentric critic as a “standard of revolt.” It was meant as a standard of revolt, but my critic must pardon me if I say that the standard is not the standard of impressionism. It is the standard of definite art form as opposed to the folk form. I may or may not be a good standard bearer, but at any rate the standard is raised and the writers of Irish are flocking to it.

“Iosagán” is not a play for the ordinary theatres or for the ordinary players. It requires a certain atmosphere, and a certain attitude of mind on the part of the actors. It has in fact been written for performance in a particular place and by particular players. I know that in that place and by those players it will be treated with the reverence



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due to a prayer. In bringing the Child Jesus into the midst of a group of boys disputing about their games, or to the knee of an old man who sings nursery rhymes to children, I am imagining nothing improbable, nothing outside the bounds of the everyday experience of innocent little children and reverent-minded old men and women. I know a priest who believes that he was summoned to the death-bed of a parishioner by Our Lord in person; and there are many hundreds of people in the countryside I write of who know that on certain nights Mary and her Child walk through the villages and if the cottage doors be left open, enter and sit awhile at the firesides of the poor.

### III—ADVENTURES



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*The Hermitage, Rathfarnham, Christmas 1910.*

When I sent the last number of *An Macaomh* from Cullenswood House I had no more idea that within twelve months I should be sending out this number from a slope of the Dublin mountains than that I should be sending it from the plains of Timbuctoo. Yet very soon afterwards I had convinced myself that the work I had planned to do for my pupils was impossible of accomplishment at Cullenswood. We were, so to speak, too much in the Suburban Groove. The city was too near ; the hills were too far. The house itself, beautiful and roomy though it was, was not large enough for our swelling numbers. The playfield, though our boys had trained themselves there to be the cleverest hurlers in Dublin, gave no scope for that outdoor life, that intercourse with the wild things of the woods and the wastes (the only things in Ireland that know what Freedom is), that

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daily adventure face to face with elemental Life and Force, with its moral discipline, with its physical hardening, which ought to play so large a part in the education of a boy. Remember that our ideal was the play-green of Eamhain, where the most gracious of all education systems had its finest expression. In a word, St. Enda's had the highest aim in education of any school in Ireland : it must have the worthiest home.

To these considerations was soon added another. The parents of some of my boys were pressing me to establish a similar school for girls. I had hoped that this burden would be taken up by someone else; but, though many were eager to join us, no one seemed quite sufficiently detached from the claims of other service to become the standard bearer of this new adventure. Then it came to me, with the clearness of a call to action, that by taking one very bold step I could at once achieve a more noble future for St. Enda's, and make it possible for a sister-school to come into being, with similar potentialities of growth. If I could transplant St. Enda's to some wide and beautiful place among or near the hills,

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Cullenswood House (which was fortunately my property) would naturally become the cradle of a 'girls' school, even as it had cradled St. Enda's. Here was a great possibility. All those interested in my work agreed as to its desirability. I have constantly found that to desire is to hope, to hope is to believe, and to believe is to accomplish. I wrote to some friends, poor but generous people who had helped me in other causes; I consulted those of the parents of my boys whom it was my privilege to know personally; a sufficient number of those thus appealed to shared my desire transmuted, through hope, to faith; and our faith has found its inevitable fruition in accomplishment. St. Enda's has now as noble a home as any other school in Ireland can have had either in old time or new; and Cullenswood House shelters its sister-school of St. Ita's.\* Thus the adventure of three years ago is seen to have been the forerunner of a new order; and *An Macaomh*, hitherto the organ of a school,

\*By coming out to Rathfarnham we lost our day-boys, who were half of our whole.



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becomes in some sense the organ of a movement.

The permanence of that order is not yet guaranteed; the issue of that movement I do not yet see. Wise men have told me that I ought never to set my foot on a path unless I can see clearly whither it will lead me. But that philosophy would condemn most of us to stand still till we rot. Surely one can do no more than assure oneself that each step one takes is right: and as to the rightness of a step one is fortunately answerable only to one's conscience and not to the wise men of the countinghouses. The street will pass judgment on our enterprises according as they have "succeeded" or "failed"; but if one can feel that one has striven faithfully to do a right thing does not one stand ultimately justified, no matter what the issue of one's attempt, no matter what the sentence of the street?

In most of the enterprises of life a fund of faith is a more valuable asset than a sum in Consols. Many years ago I knew a parish priest who wanted to build a church. He went to his bank for a loan. When asked by the bank manager what security

he had to offer, he made the simple and natural reply: "St. Joseph will see you paid." "St. Joseph is an estimable saint," said the bank manager, "but unfortunately he is not a negotiable security." The *mot* passed into a proverb among the commercial folk of Dublin, and the bank manager gained the reputation of a wit. Both bank manager and priest have since gone down to dusty death; but the priest's dying eyes saw his church walls rising slowly, and to-day the church stands, grave and beautiful, in the midst of the people. The laugh, to speak without irreverence, is on the side of St. Joseph. So does the spiritual always triumph over the actual (for the spiritual, being the true actual, is stronger than the forms and bulks we call actual), and a simple man's faith is found more potent than a negotiable instrument. If sometimes this does not seem to hold, it is because of some wavering on the part of those who profess the faith, some shrinking from an ultimate heroism, some coming home to them of an old and forgotten sin. That is why in the history of the world the tales of its lost causes move us most and teach us best.

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Each of our own souls has its own unwritten annals of causes lost and won. Some of us might fight our silent interior battles more stubbornly if we realized that the issue of each one of them has a bearing on the issue of every battle that shall ever again be fought for all eternity. The causes, earthly and divine, which we champion suffer from every defeat that Right has ever undergone in the fortresses of our hearts. 'Lonely as each soul is in its barred house, it is part of a universal conscription, and its every disgrace brings dishonour on the flag. It can best be true to its causes, and to the great cause, by being true to its finest self.

So much depends on what we only half know and on what we know not at all in ourselves and in those about us, that no man can be certain how his schemes will eventuate. But be sure that if we do manfully the thing that seems right to us we must in the long run rise to some achievement. It may not be the achievement we dreamt of; it may, to the world, and even to ourselves, wear the aspect of a failure. But the world is not our judge, and a weary and disappointed spirit is often unjust to itself.

My friends and I hope and believe that we have founded in Sgoil Eanna and Sgoil Ide two noble schools which for many years to come will send out Irish boys and girls filled with that heroic spirit which in old days gave Macha strength to run her race and prompted Enda to leave a king's house for the desolation of Arran, and which in the days of our great-grandfathers sent Emmet with a smiling face to the gibbet in Thomas Street, and nerved Anne Devlin to bare her back to the scourges of Sirr's soldiery. A new heroic age in Ireland may be a visionary's dream, or it may come about in some other way than that which we have planned ; our schools may pass away or degenerate : but at least this attempt has been made, this right thing has been striven after, and there will be something to the good somewhere if it be only a memory and a resolve in the heart of one of the least of our pupils.

I am not sure whether it is symptomatic of some development within me, or is merely a passing phase, or comes naturally from the associations that cling about these old stones and trees, that, whereas at Cullenswood

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House I spoke oftenest to our boys of Cuchulainn and his compeers of the Gaelic prime, I have been speaking to them oftenest here of Robert Emmet and the heroes of the last stand. Cuchulainn was our greatest inspiration at Cullenswood ; Robert Emmet has been our greatest inspiration here. In truth, it was the spirit of Emmet that led me to these hill-sides. I had been reading Mr. Gwynn's book, and I came out to Rathfarnham in the wake of Emmet, tracing him from Marshalsea Lane to Harold's Cross, from Harold's Cross to Butterfield House, from Butterfield House to the Priory and the Hermitage. In Butterfield Lane, the house where he lived and where Anne Devlin kept her vigil still stands ; the fields that were once Brian Devlin's dairy farm are still green. At the Priory John Philpot Curran entertained and talked, and there Emmet came and raised grave pleading eyes to Sarah Curran. Across the way, at the Hermitage, Edward Hudson had made himself a beautiful home, adding a portico and a new wing to the solemn old granite house that is now Sgoil Eanna, and dotting his

woods and fields with the picturesque bridges and arches and grottoes on which eighteenth century proprietors spent the money that their descendants (if they had it) would spend on motor-cars. The Hudsons and the Currans were friends; and, so the legend runs, Emmet and Sarah met oftener at the Hermitage than at the Priory, for they feared the terrible eye of Curran. Old people point out the places where they walked and sat: the path that runs through our wood to the left of the avenue is known as Emmet's Walk, and the pseudo-military building occupied as one of our lodges is called Emmet's Fort. A monument in the wood, beyond the little lake, is said to mark the spot where a horse of Sarah Curran's was killed and is buried. I have not troubled to verify these minute traditions; I doubt if they are capable of verification. The main story is true enough. We know that Emmet walked under these trees (some of them were already old when with bent head he passed beneath their branches up the walk, tapping the ground with his cane as was his wont); he must often have sat in this room where I now sit,



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and, lifting his eyes, have seen that mountain as I see it now (it is Kilmashogue, amid whose bracken he was to couch the night the soldiers were in Butterfield House), bathed in a purple haze as a yellow wintry sun sets, while Tibbradden has grown dark behind it. I do not think that a house could have a richer memory to treasure, or a school a finer inspiration, than that of that quiet figure with its eyes on Kilmashogue.

Edward Hudson's son, William Elliot Hudson, was born in this house on August 11th, 1796. He lived to be the friend of Davis and Duffy, and whenever any good cause they had at heart was endangered for want of funds, Hudson's purse was always open. The Celtic and Ossianic Societies found him an unwearying patron. He died in 1857, having a few months before his death endowed the Royal Irish Academy with the fund for the publication of its still unfinished Irish Dictionary. He also left the Academy his library. If ever we have money to spare we will place a bust of that good man in one of our halls (the Academy has, I think, a marble bust of him by

Christopher Moore). It is a strange and symbolic thing that the house in which William Hudson was born should after a hundred and fourteen years become the locus of such an endeavour as ours, and that his father's grottoes and woodland cells, though they never (as Hudson seemed to have hoped posterity might believe) resounded to chant of monk or voice of Mass-bell, should re-echo the Irish war-cries of eighty militant young Gaels who find them admirably adapted for defence in the absence of cannon. Edward Hudson in the eighteenth century had his eyes on the sixth century, but he was building for us in the twentieth. His quarrying had ends he did not foresee, and his piled stones have at last their destined use.

One of the Hudsons married James Henthorne Todd, whose place is the next to ours on the Dublin side. On the other side of us stretches Marley, through which our stream comes from Glensouthwell and the hills. "Buck" Whaley's more modest mansion is beyond the Priory. They were noble homes, those eighteenth-century mansions of County Dublin. An aroma as of

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high courtesy and rich living, sometimes passing into the riotous, still adheres to them. The Bossi mantle-pieces, the great spaces of hall, the old gardens, with their fountains and sun-dials, carefully walled in from the wilderness, all this has a certain homely stateliness, a certain artificiality if you will, not very Irish, yet expressive of a very definite phase in Irish, or Anglo-Irish, history. In such mansions as these lived those who ruled Ireland; in such mansions as these lived those who sold Ireland.

A prayer for Edward Hudson who made this home for us. A prayer for him for the spaciousness of soul which, while he was sufficiently the creature of his day to wall his inner gardens with walls as straight and as square as ever eighteenth-century formalist loved, prompted him to fling his outer walls now near, now far, up hill and down dale, so as to include within their verge not only the long straggling wood, and the four wide fields, but a winding strip of mountain glen with a rushing stream at its bottom. Perhaps I ought to say that I am not really sure that it was Hudson who built these walls: indeed walls were here half a century

before his time; but there is a fashion at Sgoil Eanna of attributing everything ancient and modern to Edward Hudson, who has become a sort of local equivalent to the Roman guide's Michelangelo. " 'Tis wonderful the life a bit of water gives to a place," said my predecessor's gardener when conducting me on my first tour over the Hermitage. The stream makes three leaps within our grounds, and over each cascade thus formed a bridge has been thrown. When the river is in spate, as now, I hear the roar of the nearest cascade, a quarter-of-a-mile off at night from my bedroom. It reminds me of the life out there in the woods, in the grass, in the river. And in truth I don't think more of wild life can be crowded into fifty acres anywhere else so near Dublin. It is not merely that the familiar birds of Irish woods and gardens seem to swarm here in numbers that I do not remember to have seen paralleled elsewhere, but that the shyer creatures of the mountains and hidden places abide with us or come down often to visit us, as if they felt at home here. With a smothered cry a partridge or a snipe will sometimes rise

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from your feet in the wood ; when you come through the fields on some wild place of the stream you will not seldom surprise a heron rising on slow wings and drifting lazily away ; often a coot will plash in the water. But the glory of our stream is its kingfishers. You catch athwart the current, between the steep wooded banks, a quiver of blue, a blue strange and exotic amid the sober greys and browns ; then another and another, sometimes as many as five at a time, like so many quivering blue flames. We are all under *geasa* to cherish the rare, beautiful creature that has made our stream its home. There are fiercer and stronger fishers that haunt the stream too. Once or twice I have seen the little eager form of an otter gliding behind the sallies where the stream cuts deep. I think it is partly to that free-booter we owe it that the trout are not as numerous now as they were of yore. Yet we will not intervene between him and the fish ; let them fight on their old war, instinct against instinct. Sometimes rabbits come out and gambol under the trees in the evening ; and they are happy, in the foolish way of rabbits,

till one of the river rats wants his supper. So day and night there is red murder in the greenwood and in every greenwood in the world. It is murder and death that make possible the terrible beautiful thing we call physical life. Life springs from death, life lives on death. Why do we loathe worms and vultures? We all batten on dead things, even as they do, only we, like most of our fellow-creatures, kill on purpose to eat, whereas they eat what has been killed without reference to them. All of which would be very terrible were death really an evil thing. . . . The otter and the river rats had made me forget the gentle squirrels. They share our trees with the birds, and try in vain to teach them (and us) their providence. A flying hurley ball has no terror for them, and sometimes they disport in the chestnut tree in the playfield even while a hurling match is in progress. They have a distant outpost beyond the walls. Often I see one running across the road from the Priory woods to ours. Long may their little colony flourish.

If our boys observe their fellow-citizens of the grass and woods and water as wisely



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and as lovingly as they should, I think they will learn much. That was one of my hopes in bringing them here from the suburbs. Every education must be said to fail which does not bring to the child two things, an inspiration and a certain hardening. Inspiration will come from the hero-stories of the world and especially of his own people; from the associations of the school place; from the humanity and great-heartedness of the teacher; from religion, humbly and reverently taught, humbly and reverently accepted, if it be really a spiritual religion and not a mere formula. In proportion as they bring such inspiration schools fulfil well the first part of their task. But they have more to do than this.

No dream is more foolish than the dream of some sentimentalists that the reign of force is past, or passing; that the world's ancient law of unending strife has been repealed; that henceforward the first duty of every man is to be dapper. If I say that it is still the first duty of every man to be good, I shall be accused of being trite; but I am not more sure of the rightness of this

than I am that it is the second duty of every man to be strong. We want again the starkness of the antique world. There will be battles, silent and terrible, or loud and catastrophic, while the earth and heavens last; and woe to him who flinches when his enemy compasses him about, for to him alone damnation is due. If this is true, it is of the uttermost importance that we should train every child to be an efficient soldier, efficient to fight, when need is, his own, his people's, and the world's battles, spiritual and temporal. And the old Ossianic definition of efficiency holds good: "Strength in our hands, truth on our lips, and cleanliness in our hearts."

"Strength in our hands." Our boys at Sgoil Eanna (and our girls at Sgoil Ide) have been seeking and gaining strength in their hands and all that strength of hand connotes (for the Ossianic storyteller meant the phrase to cover much) in many places and by divers ways, chiefly on their playing-fields and by wielding their camáns. My salient recollection of last year will always be of a sunny hurling field and the rush of our players up it; of the admiration of the

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onlookers to see such light boyish figures, looking whiter and slighter in their white jerseys and knickers than they really were, pitted against young men, yet, going into the field so nonchalantly ; of the deep cheer often repeated as their opponents piled up points ; of Maurice Fraher, grand in defence, rallying a losing field ; of the battle-cry "Sgoil Eanna" ringing out in clear boyish voices as Eamonn Bulfin received the ball from Vincent through Fred O'Doherty ; of breathless suspense at a passage of miraculous passing between Eamonn Bulfin, Brendan O'Toole, and Frank Burke, back and forward, forward and back, all the world wondering ; of Jerome Cronin standing ready, a slight figure, collected and watchful ; of Burke, daring as Cuchulainn (whom he resembles in his size and in his darkness) outwitting or prostrating some towering full-back ; of a quick pass to Jerome Cronin, Jerome's lightning leap, his swift swinging stroke, and the ball singing into the goal as the heavens rang to the shout of "Sgoil Eanna" ! Some such rally as this (it was like Cuchulainn's battle-fury when Laegh reviled him) brought us absolute victory or

changed rout into honourable defeat on many a hurling and football field last year. We fought our way through the season, winning the leadership and medals in the Juvenile Hurling League, and losing them in Minor Hurling and Football only in the finals.\*

This year we have called into existence (or rather Dr. Doody has called into existence on our behalf) a Leinster Inter-College Championship in Hurling and Football, which will further stimulate Sgoil Eanna to excel at its chosen games. And I am seeing to it that all our lads learn to shoot, to fence, to march, to box, to wrestle, and to swim. I hope that the other schools and colleges will follow us here, too. Every day I feel more certain that the *hardening* of her boys and young men is the work of the moment for Ireland.

The National University is at work, and Irish is part of its essential basis of work. The banner of Sgoil Eanna has been carried proudly into it by Denis Gwynn. At the examination in October for Entrance Scholar-

\* In the following year (1911) we won the School Championships both in Hurling and Football.

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ships at University College, Dublin, he won the first of the Classical Scholarships (£50), fighting, like our hurlers, a boy against men. His subjects were Greek, Latin and Irish. This, of course, is the highest academic distinction open to any pupil of a secondary school in Ireland. We may do memorable things in the years that are to come, but nothing more memorable, nothing more gallant, than the achievement of Denis Gwynn's in the first year of the National University. Frank Connolly, Joseph Fegan, and William Bradley have also matriculated, so that something of our soldier spirit will soon be surging through Irish student-life outside these walls.

We sent forward some of our boys for the Intermediate last year, deviating from our maxims so far as to devote some weeks towards the end of the year to translating Irish and French texts into English. In the issue, John Dowling won an Exhibition in the Modern Literary Course of the Junior Grade, qualified for a prize in the Science Course, and won a Composition Prize in Irish. If we had concentrated on Intermediate work and adopted Intermediate

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methods I have no doubt we should have done even better. But we have not concentrated on Intermediate work, and have no intention of doing so ; and as for methods, it is for the Intermediate Board to adopt ours, not for us to adopt theirs. In this coming year we shall use the Intermediate even more sparingly, convinced that our boys will be the gainers.

If we had been believers in luck we should never have left Cullenswood House, seeing that we achieved there last year the highest academic distinction and also the highest athletic distinction achievable by a secondary school in Ireland. Whatever tradition of success clings around the place our boys magnanimously bequeath to their sisters and little brothers who now sit in their old class-rooms and play in their old field. Of these newcomers in Cullenswood House, little can be written here, for they have yet their history to make. When I go to see them I find them full of the eagerness to attempt something, to accomplish something, if need be, to suffer something. I think that is the right spirit in which to begin the making of history.

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It seems a far cry now back to our plays of February last, on the little stage at Cullenswood House, and their subsequent performance in the Abbey Theatre. Mr. Colum's dramatization of one of the high tragedies of the Gael, "The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel," was in the mood of great antique art, the mood of Egyptian sculpture and *dán direach* verse, solemn, uplifting, serenely sad like the vigil of those high ones who watch with pitying but unrelenting eyes the awful dooms and dolours of men. The other play, my dramatization of my own "Iosagán," owed whatever beauty it had, a beauty altogether of interpretation, to the young actors who played it; and they did bring into it something of the beauty of their own fresh lives, the beauty of childhood, the beauty of boyhood. I fear that we shall find it difficult in the future to achieve anything finer in acting than was achieved by Sorley MacGarvey, Eamonn Bulfin, Desmond Ryan, and Denis Gwynn in "The Destruction of the Hostel," and by Patrick Conroy and the whole group of children in "Iosagán." And an almost higher achievement was the vast



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solemnity, the remote mysteriousness, put into the chant of the Three Red Pipers by Fred O'Doherty, John Dowling, and Milo MacGarry. We performed the plays three times in our theatre during February.\* In April we repeated them at the Abbey with Dr. Hyde's "An Naomh ar Iarraidh" and Mr. O'Grady's "The Coming of Fionn."

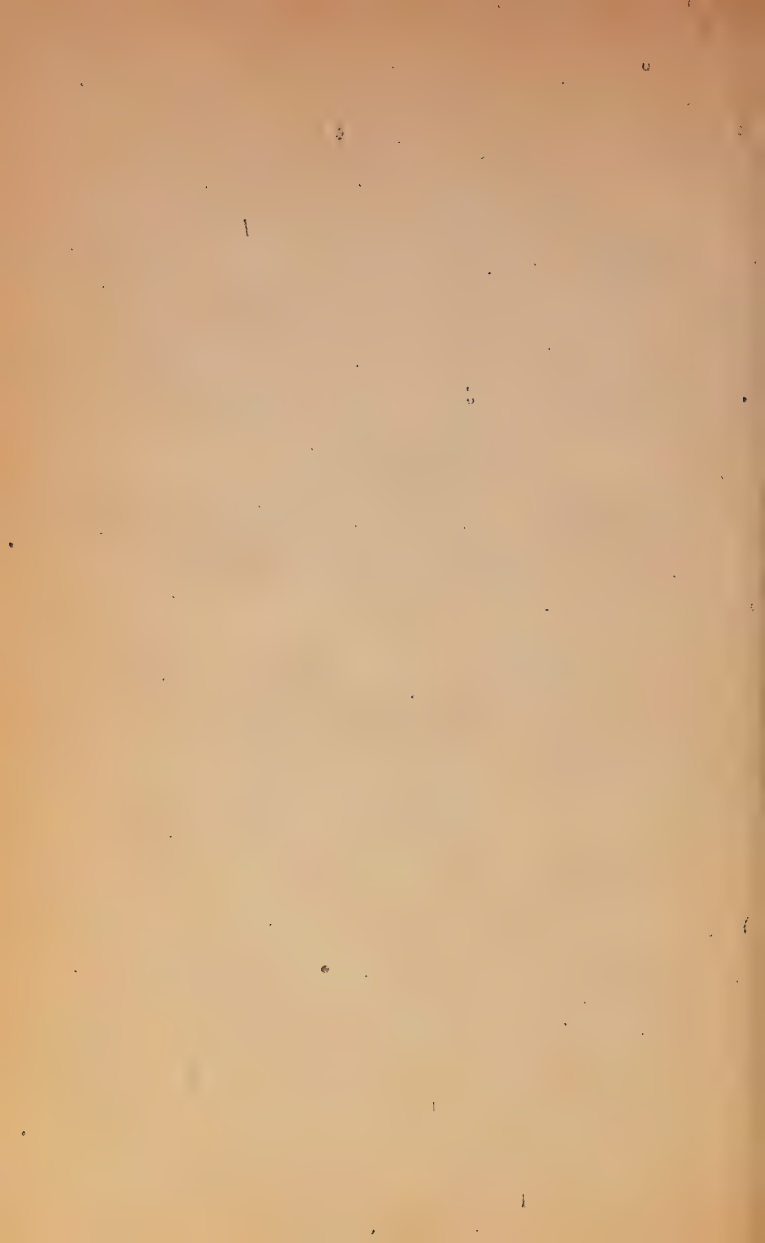
We brought the year to a close by going down to Cuchulainn's country and performing the Cuchulainn Pageant at the Castle-bellingham Feis. I think that was the most spacious day in all our two years since we had come together to Sgoil Eanna. I shall remember long the march of the boys round the field in their heroic gear, with their spears, their swords, their hounds, their horses; the sun shining on comely fair heads and straight sturdy bare limbs; the buoyant sense of youth and life and strength that were there. There was another march with our pipers and banners to the station; and then a march home through the lamplit

\*After we had sent out the invitations and received the answers, we realized that our theatre would not hold more than two-thirds of each evening's guests. We had consequently to enlarge the theatre by a half, a feat which we accomplished in three days.

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streets of Dublin. It was our last march to the old Sgoil Eanna. We have a larger school now, in a worthier place ; but the old place and the faces in that march (for some who marched that night have never since answered a rally of Sgoil Eanna and never will again as schoolboys) are often in my mind ; and sometimes I wonder whether, if ever I need them for any great service, they will rally, as many of them have promised to do, from wherever they may be, holding faith to the inspiration and the tradition I have tried to give them.

## IV—REJOICINGS



## IV—REJOICINGS

*The Hermitage, Rathfarnham, May 1913.*

I have roused this *Macaomh* of mine again, having allowed him to slumber for two years. Like those panoplied kings that are said to sleep in Aileach, he has only been awaiting a call. I send him out now to publish tidings of sundry pageantries, pomps, and junketings : festivities to which my friends and I are inviting the men of Ireland, not altogether out of the largeness of our hearts, but with ulterior motives appertaining to the weal of a certain College. I send him out too in order that with his hero's voice he may utter three shouts on a hill in celebration of the completion of the fifth year of a certain gallant adventure.

To be plain, St. Enda's College has now been at work for five years,\* and we propose to commemorate the achievement of the lustrum by making a very determined effort

\*St. Ita's, as a secondary school, was closed in June 1912, but was continued as a University Hostel for girls.

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to reduce the wholly preposterous debt which we incurred in our early months for buildings. There are some adventures so perilous that no one would ever go into them except with the gay laughing irresponsibility of a boy ; they are not to be “ scanned ” beforehand ; one does one’s deed without thinking, as a boy on the playfield strikes for goal, and whether one wins or fails, one laughs. It is really the only thing to do. Such an adventure, I think, has been St. Enda’s, and such the spirit in which we have gone into it. Not that we have not had a very serious purpose and a very high conception of our duty, but that we have found these things compatible with hearts as merry as the hearts of the saints ; or rather supportable only by a hilarity as of heaven. Such burdens as we undertook five years ago would assuredly have crushed us if we had been gloomy worldlings, persons oppressed with bank balances and anxious about the rise and fall of stocks or the starting prices of racehorses. Fortunately the cares of competency have never existed for us, hermits of a happy hermitage. Having no little things to be troubled about, we have been able to busy

ourselves with great adventures. Yet, we are worldly enough to desire to lighten our burdens, and generous enough to admit others to a share in our perils. Whence these excursions and alarms of ours at the Abbey Theatre, at Jones's Road, and elsewhere : it is our way of helping others to achieve sanctity.

It has been sung of the Gael that his fighting is always merry and his feasting always sad. Several recent books by foreigners have recorded the impression of Ireland as a sad, an unutterably sad country, because their writers have seen the Gael chiefly at his festivals : at the Oireachtas, at a race meeting, at a political dinner addressed by Mr. John Dillon. And it is a true impression, for the exhilaration of fighting has gone out of Ireland, and for the past decade most of us have been as Fionn was after his battles—"in heaviness of depression and horror of self-questioning." Here at St. Enda's we have tried to keep before us the image of Fionn during his battles—careless and laughing, with that gesture of the head, that gallant smiling gesture, which has been an eternal gesture



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in Irish history ; it was most memorably made by Emmet when he mounted the scaffold in Thomas Street, smiling, he who had left so much, and most recently by those Three who died at Manchester. When people say that Ireland will be happy when her mills throb and her harbours swarm with shipping, they are talking as foolishly as if one were to say of a lost saint or of an unhappy lover: "That man will be happy again when he has a comfortable income." I know that Ireland will not be happy again until she recollects that old proud gesture of hers, and that laughing gesture of a young man that is going into battle or climbing to a gibbet.

What I have just written has reminded me of a dream I had nearly four years ago. I dreamt that I saw a pupil of mine, one of our boys at St. Enda's, standing alone upon a platform above a mighty sea of people ; and I understood that he was about to die there for some august cause, Ireland's or another. He looked extraordinarily proud and joyous, lifting his head with a smile almost of amusement ; I remember noticing his bare white throat and the hair on his

forehead stirred by the wind, just as I had often noticed them on the hurling field. I felt an inexplicable exhilaration as I looked on him, and this exhilaration was heightened rather than diminished by my consciousness that the great silent crowd regarded the boy with pity and wonder rather than with approval—as a fool who was throwing away his life rather than a martyr that was doing his duty. It would have been so easy to die before an applauding crowd or before a hostile crowd: but to die before that silent, unsympathetic crowd! I dreamt then that another of my pupils stepped upon the scaffold and embraced his comrade, and that then he tied a white bandage over the boy's eyes, as though he would resent the hangman doing him that kindly office. And this act seemed to me to symbolize an immense brotherly charity and loyalty, and to be the compensation to the boy that died for the indifference of the crowd.

This is the only really vivid dream I have ever had since I used to dream of hobgoblins when I was a child. I remember telling it to my boys at a school meeting a few days later, and their speculating as to which of

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them I had seen in my dream: a secret which I do not think I gave away. But what recurs to me now is that when I said that I could not wish for any of them a happier destiny than to die thus in the defence of some true thing, they did not seem in any way surprised, for it fitted in with all we had been teaching them at St. Enda's. I do not mean that we have ever carried on anything like a political or revolutionary propaganda among the boys, but simply that we have always allowed them to feel that no one can finely live who hoards life too jealously: that one must be generous in service, and withal joyous, accounting even supreme sacrifices slight. Mr. J. M. Barrie makes his Peter Pan say (and it is finely said) "To die will be a very big adventure," but, I think, that in making my littleboy in "An Rí" offer himself with the words "Let me do this little thing," I am nearer to the spirit of the heroes.

I find that in endeavouring to show that we are joyous at St. Enda's I have become exceedingly funereal. One of my pupils has accused me of "sternly organizing merry-

makings." The truth is that it is from the boys that live in this place that its joyousness comes, and if we share in the joy it is by rising to their height from our own slough of despond. When we attempt to be joyful on our own account the joy sometimes hangs fire. Mr. MacDonagh has told me how, when we were preparing the first number of *An Macaomh*, I came to him one evening with a face of portentous gravity and begged him to be humorous. I explained that *An Macaomh* was too austere, too esoteric: it needed some touch of delicate Ariel-like fancy, some genial burst of Falstaffian laughter. Mr. MacDonagh is one of the most fanciful and humorous men, but even he could not become Ariel-like or Falstaffian to order. He and I sat in our respective rooms for a whole evening lugubriously trying to be humorous; but our thoughts were of graves and worms and epitaphs, of unpaid bills, of approaching examinations, of certain Anglo-Irish comedies: the memory of it is still dreary. The next day at luncheon the clear voice of a boy spoke and the imp humour was in our midst: he told us the history of

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the Peacock of Hyderabad; and *An Macaomh* was saved.\*

I believe that many teachers fail because instead of endeavouring to raise themselves to the level of their pupils (I mean the moral, emotional, and imaginative level), they endeavour to bring their pupils down to theirs. For a high, if eccentric moral code, a glad and altruistic philosophy, a vision of ultimate beauty and truth seen through the fantastic and often humorous figments of a child's dreams, the teacher substitutes the mean philosophy of the world, the mean code of morals of the countinghouses. Our Christianity becomes respectability. We are not content with teaching the ten commandments that God spake in thunder and Christ told us to keep if we would enter into life, and the precepts of the Church which He commanded us to hear: we add thereto the precepts or commandments of Respectable Society. And these are chiefly six: Thou shalt not be extreme in anything—in wrongdoing lest thou be put to gaol, in right-

\*See *An Macaomh*, Vol. I. No. I. A humorous poem by Thomas MacDonagh and Denis Gwynn.

doing lest thou be deemed a saint ; Thou shalt not give away thy substance lest thou become a pauper , Thou shalt not engage in trade or manufacture lest thy hands become grimy ; Thou shalt not carry a brown paper parcel lest thou shock Rathgar ; Thou shalt not have an enthusiasm lest solicitors and their clerks call thee a fool ; Thou shalt not endanger thy Job. One has heard this shocking morality taught in Christian schools, expounded in Christian newspapers, even preached from Christian pulpits. Those things about the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, and that rebuke to Martha who was troubled about many things are thought to have no relevancy to modern life. But if that is so Christianity has no relevancy to modern life, for these are of the essence of Christ's teaching.

The great enemy of practical Christianity has always been respectable society. Respectable society has now been reinforced by political economy. I feel sure that political economy was invented, not by Adam Smith, but by the devil. Perhaps Adam Smith was the human instrument of whom that wily one made use, even as he made

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use of the elder Adam to pervert men to the ways of respectability. Be certain that in political economy there is no Way of Life either for a man or for a people. Life for both is a matter, not of conflicting tariffs, but of conflicting powers of good and evil; and what have Ricardo and Malthus and Stuart Mill to teach about this? Ye men and peoples, burn your books on rent theories and land values and go back to your sagas.

If you will not go back to your sagas, your sagas will come to you again in new guise: for they are terrible immortal things, not capable of being put down by respectable society or by political economy. The old truths will find new mouths, the old sorrows and ecstasies new interpretation. Beauty is the garment of truth, or perhaps we should put it that beauty is the substance in which truth bodies itself forth; and then we can say that beauty, like matter, is indestructible, however it may change in form. When you think that you have excluded it by your brick walls it flows in upon you, multitudinous. I know not how the old beauty will come back for us in this country and century; through an Irish theatre perhaps,



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or through a new poetry welling up in Irish-speaking villages. But come back it will, and its coming will be as the coming of God's angel, when

“ . . . . . seems another morn  
Risen on mid-noon . . . . . ”

I have to perform here the noble duty of giving thanks. First, there is a friend of St. Enda's whom I do not name, for I do not know that he would like me to name him. He and two other friends of older date have made St. Enda's a fact; for, though not what the world calls very wealthy, they have enabled me, whom certainly the world would call very poor, to found and to carry on this College. And I have to thank many other friends ranging from little boys up to church dignitaries, and including the parents of nearly all my pupils, for an unshaken loyalty to an ideal and to a place which by many are still misunderstood and distrusted.

Then coming to quite contemporary events, I have to thank the good people who looked to the organization of the St. Enda's Fête and Drawing of Prizes.

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And I have to thank Mr. W. B. Yeats and his fellow-workers at the Abbey Theatre for a very great generosity—a special performance which they arranged to give for us on the evening of May 17th. Mr. Yeats, in a lecture on Rabindranath Tagore, had spoken of Mr. Tagore's school for Indian boys as "the Indian St. Enda's." A friend of mine, interested by this, suggested that we should go to Mr. Yeats and ask him whether his Theatre could not do something to help St. Enda's. We had hardly time to frame our project in words when Mr. Yeats assented to it; and then he did a more generous thing still, for he offered to produce for the benefit of St. Enda's the play of Mr. Tagore's to the production of which he had been looking forward as to an important epoch in the life of the Abbey—the first presentation to Europe of a poet who, he thinks, is possibly the greatest now living. And he invited me to produce a St. Enda's play along with Mr. Tagore's. I understood then more clearly than ever that no one is so generous as a great artist; for a great artist is always giving gifts.

The play we decided to produce along

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with "The Post Office" was my morality, "An Rí." We had enacted it during the previous summer, with much pageantry of horses and marchings, at a place in our grounds where an old castellated bridge, not unlike the entrance to a monastery, is thrown across a stream. Since that performance I had added some speeches with the object of slightly deepening the characterization; and our boys were already rehearsing it for indoor production. Of Mr. Tagore's play I knew nothing except what I had heard from Mr. Yeats, but, I saw that both of us had had in our minds the same image of a humble boy and of the pomp of death, and that my play would be as it were antiphonal to his. Since I have seen Mr. Tagore's manuscript I have realized that the two plays are more similar in theme than I had suspected, and that mine will be to his in the nature of an "amen;" for in our respective languages, he speaking in terms of Indian village life, and I in terms of an Irish saga, we have both expressed the same truth, that the highest thing anyone can do is to serve.

P. H. PEARSE.



V—A RETROSPECT



## V—A RETROSPECT

*Cullenswood House, August 1917.*

It is not a correct reading of Sgoil Eanna's story, although, undoubtedly, a very picturesque one, which suggests Sgoil Eanna begun as a pastoral idyll beneath Rathmines elms, and ended a fiery epic beneath the burning ruins of the Dublin Post Office. There was even less melodrama about the school than one finds in the published writings of its founder. As the earnest reader of this book should already understand, Sgoil Eanna developed along the lines P. H. Pearse's inspiration planned and achieved. That development was a consistent one. The first day foreshadows the last.

I remember well the day Sgoil Eanna first opened. An audience of forty pupils of mingled ages and sizes sitting curious and attentive within Cullenswood House, while their new Headmaster addresses them, by turns,



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in English and Irish, swaying slightly from side to side, dressed as was his invariable custom in black, unknown to most of us. He strikes us as a very good and enthusiastic man, not quite a Sunday school teacher, as some irreverent wight whispers. In Irish lettering the names of Ireland's heroes, saints and sages, run around the wainscoting of the walls. Some hear Irish for the first time. We all shall hear it in future until it has grown as familiar to us as English. Mr. Pearse outlines the school routine. He urges us to work hard. He persuades us we shall work hard. He announces coming plays and pageants. He begins to tell us the Cuchulainn saga which he subsequently continues every day after religious instruction, until the "dark, sad boy, comeliest of the boys of Eire," has become an important if invisible member of the staff. In one of those tense outbursts of enthusiasm which seemed to magnetize any audience, he ends with an advocacy of his Irish-Ireland faith: "We speak the Irish language not because it is a beautiful and venerable language, not because it enshrines a noble and ancient

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literature, but because it is our own language." • The infectiousness of his faith urged us to master not only that language but to follow the ideals he inculcated. He never tried to impress his personality upon one of his pupils. In general matters, his mere presence alone sufficed ; he had won our sympathies and affections. The most patient of men, he would descend to argument upon essentials and doubtful things whenever we had the temerity to attempt it. The grave, tenacious idealist in his black gown we saw that day was not the Pearse even sympathetic critics misunderstand to-day, but the Headmaster whose portrait has been unconsciously self-drawn in earlier chapters here.

Upon that opening day Thomas Mac Donagh was present too. He assured the diffident audience of mingled sizes and ages that knowledge was a wondrous power. He assumed with great confidence we should master the tongue of Keating and O'Growney in three months. During a few hours he had strayed into innumerable bye-paths of knowledge where Cuchulainn elbowed Dante and Catullus walked down

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arm-in-arm with Canon O'Leary and Edmund Waller. The lands and men of his travels were the background to this astounding banquet of knowledge. Then he confessed his national sins. His conversion to the Irish-Ireland creed had been as startling as the conversion of St. Paul. Bright, diffuse, voluble, enthusiastic as we found him, we soon perceived him to be also, in the strictest sense of the word, a master. He possessed as few possess the power of stimulation and suggestion. He was very critical, and especially implacable as a critic of our school plays. In Sgoil Eanna he added this faculty of his to his general function of stage manager. Until the curtain fell upon the last night Thomas MacDonagh's tongue and vision were of a sharpness and keenness beyond description. Thereafter, he sought out the players behind the scenes, radiant in a kilt and lavish in praise. Upon these occasions he invariably apologized that he had not been as Máine Honeymoon. Various valuable lessons he gave us in the soft answer. "Say always," he told us with twinkling eyes, "when you want to criticize a friend :

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“Now like me, you—!” On the hurling field, in the class-room, at Gaelic League festivals he was the same, fanciful, humorous, with a thousand opinions and words to sustain them.

He spoke very often of poets but never much about his own poetry. Once I came upon him beneath a tree surrounded by brown paper parcels. A huge bonfire flared beneath the shade. I learned he was burning “The Ivory Gate.” While I surreptitiously pocketed a volume and thanked him for the gift of another, he explained the reason of the sacrifice. It was due to dislike and severity, confined to himself, for distinguished critics and several notable poets had been deceived. They praised, to his astonishment, “The Ivory Gate.” “Begad!” he laughed, as he stirred the smouldering and fiery ashes, “this will make the edition more valuable; such a pyre always does.” Then he added seriously and proudly: “I have just got ready a new book for the press, and it I will never burn.” MacDonagh’s lines to his son preserve better than any monument or eulogy the MacDonagh we knew in Sgoil Eanna, just

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as "Literature in Ireland" remains the best memorial of the later MacDonagh of University College, Dublin. But as a professor in U.C.D., although his eager enthusiasm, his help, his inspiration were as of old, a something fixed and at once joyous and sombre seemed to have crept in. In the Volunteer movement he appears to have found the thing he had sought for all his life. In his judgments of men and books he expressed himself with a great certainty. In the midst of arguments, relevant and irrelevant he saw as if by intuition the end of all arguments. Where in Sgoil Eanna he had told his listeners to find their standards, he himself had now found them and fought for them with the clearness and tolerance of a man who knows whither he is bound.

William Pearse who was an artist first and last had a place in the scheme of Sgoil Eanna second only to his brother in importance. To the general public he lived beneath the shadow of that brother's fame. Sgoil Eanna owes, however, an equal debt of gratitude to both of them. If the school was made and upheld by Padraic, Willie's common-sense advice upon many

## A SUCCESS

occasions, his unwearied attention and management during the Hermitage period, his service as a teacher had an incalculable part in making the venture the success it was. Indeed second is a doubtful word, for the long intimacy between the pair resulted in a perfect co-operation and harmony which could only come from a thorough understanding. Towards the end in Rathfarnham Willie took on a responsibility in the direction and conduct of the college unsuspected by outsiders. Before then he had devoted himself, apart from the art side, to his work as a sculptor. It was he who arranged our plays and pageants, designed the scenery and discussed every detail with Padraic in the course of long nightly talks.

A life-long student of Shakespeare and a fine actor, he insisted upon his English students performing a scene or two from the play in hand at Christmas or Easter, or the periodical céilidhe he organized fortnightly. These fortnightly functions deserve more than passing mention. They were a combination of work and pleasure, a happy and informal mingling of concert



## THE STORY OF

and debating society where subjects of a literary and general interest were discussed. Generally the gathering was around a stove in the Refectory. When dramatic representations were the order, the scene was transferred to the Study Hall.

The conquests of the theatre and learning he insisted were not enough, but must march abreast with the conquest of the field. He showed a keener interest in games and athletics than the boys themselves, turning out every half-holiday in hurling and football match, as an earnest of his sincerity. His great enthusiasm for hand-ball led him to organize tournaments for which he bore the entire expenses. This gave hand-ball a permanent standing in the school.

William Pearse had nearly as full and effective control over the school as the Headmaster himself. He had also a profound knowledge and insight as regards the characters of those beneath his charge, erring perhaps upon the side of charity more often than not. In theory and sometimes in practice he was a convinced disciplinarian. He followed the system of



trusting to the honour of the individual, which worked with excellent results. In important things and nearly all trivial things, I venture to say the staff of Sgoil Eanna were never deceived. If the boys of Sgoil Eanna repeated as their catch-cry their Headmaster's exhortation that "we the boys of St. Enda's school never told a lie, falsehood was never imputed to us," should be their reputation, they certainly earned that reputation.

Here is no place to speak of William Pearse's death. He bore himself in that final adventure with a dignity and nobility worthy of the unselfish and splendid man he was. He expressed to me once a decided opinion upon his probable death in an insurrection. "I should not care," he said. "I should die for what I believed. Beyond this school I have no interest in life."

I remember the closing of Sgoil Eanna before Easter 1916. I remember the Headmaster speaking quietly to the boys as they said good-bye. He knew it was the last time he would see most of them, but said no word out of the ordinary, going on unperturbed with his work while the rumbling of the

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coming storm was audible to him alone. On St. Enda's Day, 21st March, 1916, he made his only farewell speech. It was at a céilidhe. Sgoil Eanna, he declared, had gone on for eight years. He hoped it would continue for eighty, but so far as he was concerned its work was done. He had founded Sgoil Eanna to make Irish boys efficient soldiers in the battles spiritual and temporal of their country. In the Irish Volunteers that day were many such soldiers. It had taken the blood of the Son of God to redeem the world. It would take the blood of the sons of Ireland to redeem Ireland. Volunteer officers, popular singers, and many friends from outside were present. The openness of the speech, the news of the affray in the Tullamore Volunteer Hall that morning, the actual situation in the country gave an electric significance to the speech. "Strange," said William Pearse, as he listened to the vigorous national songs, "strange the effectiveness sincerity lends to a song. For years we have listened to these songs. Only to-day have we fully realized their meaning." Easter 1916 was more than a spectacle to many of the audience.

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Ah ! such memories of Sgoil Eanna from its beginning ! Memories of a free, many-sided and many-coloured life, memories of tested traditions and personalities which live already in an oral tradition. We have an oral tradition already in all quarters of Ireland and beyond Ireland, a philosophy, and owe much to the strange fate which brought us together. Mr. Pearse has asked me to continue the story from May 1913, and yet it seems to me I am only elaborating a tale twice told. Sgoil Eanna's traditions are rooted in the first years. These have a glamour and a joyousness only known to the happy participants. The prospectus when issued nine years ago, struck many keenly critical and interested students as too good to be true. It came nearer reality than do most word-built kingdoms of the fancy. From the first there was question of something greater than a mere school ; than the eternal rages of masters, mechanical programmes and the pranks of boys. The miracle was achieved of making boys so love school that they hated to leave it. Every boy who came to Sgoil Eanna grew fond of it. It was not that he had stumbled

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into a picnic with theatrical excursions for a distraction. He had to work hard in the study and on the playing field. The subsequent records of Sgoil Eanna pupils who have entered into widely diverging spheres of the national life, is the proof thereof.

“To take Ireland for granted,” is the most concise phrase to explain the spirit which permeated staff and pupils. In athletic championships, in winning scholarships, in the everyday life of each boy, in the use of Irish as the official language, this spirit spoke in plain and appealing deeds. Some enthusiasts will do anything in reason for Irish except learn and speak the language. Sgoil Eanna early removed that reproach by conducting the proceedings of the school committees in Irish. \* These committees determined the internal organization of the school, and were elected with great excitement annually by the boys themselves. One heard the divers accents of the five provinces rising and blending in a splendid conflict upon anything from politics to minor details of hurling teams, comparative newcomers soon following the fray with a lively intelligent interest. No boy heard English

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literature was a thing to be avoided; he did hear Irish literature was one to be cherished and cultivated. No boy was forced to stop speaking English, he did hear Irish around him in all important school business till he thought no more of asking why he should speak Irish than of inquiring why he should not speak Chinese.

On the dramatic side the results, as already indicated, were startling. Sgoil Eanna players earned a high reputation—the critics being witness—by the absence of self-consciousness and that stilted exaggeration which often mars school performances. The Passion Play in Irish, produced at the Abbey Theatre, Passion Week 1911, is worthy of more lengthy mention than Mr. Pearse has made in a short note in *An Macaomh*.\* Of it Mr. Padraic Colum wrote: “It was made convincing by the simple sincerity of the composition and the reverence of the performance. No one who witnessed it had any doubt as to the fitness of the production. This Passion Play takes us back naturally to the origin of modern

\* Especially in view of Mr. Pearse's wish that the play should not be published.

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European drama. In a sense, it is the first serious theatre piece in Irish. It has root power. Naturally Irish drama begins with the Passion Play, the Miracle Play or the Morality Play. This Passion Play gives the emotion out of which a Gaelic drama may arise. If its production be ever made an annual event it might create a tradition of acting and dramatic writing in Irish." It had been decided to make the play not an annual but a triennial event. Postponed at Easter 1914, the Easter of 1916 indefinitely postponed it.

The students of Sgoil Eanna and Sgoil Ide roused Dublin by their earnest, simple and unelaborate enacting of the Passion Play. Simplicity, dignity, reverence in the general staging and management, all these helped to make the play the magnificent success it was, but to P. H. Pearse the main credit must be given, because in the first place he arranged the play itself, and also because of the endless and untiring foresight and patience with which he carried through the work against many serious obstacles and difficulties.

To come to the play itself. The story,



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the scenes, the words were those of the Gospel. A few unavoidable deviations were made from the narrative for dramatic purposes. The denials of Peter were made to take place in the courtyard of Pilate instead of in that of the High Priest. In the last act certain speeches taken from an old Irish hymn, "Caoineadh Mhuire," were spoken by Jesus, Mary and Peter.

As the curtain rises on the first scene, the Garden of Gethsemane, certain boys of Jerusalem are playing and singing old Jewish songs beneath the olive trees. As darkness gathers, they leave the garden into which presently come Jesus and the Eleven. He warns them of His approaching betrayal and death. Peter, with vehemence, John and the other disciples gravely deny that they will desert Him. Taking with Him Peter and James and John, and bidding them watch with Him, He goes forward and prays. Thrice He prays that the chalice may pass away from Him, if it be His Father's will; the disciples meanwhile sleep. At the third prayer, an angel appears from Heaven comforting Him. Rousing the disciples, He tells them that He is at



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hand who will betray Him. A murmur, low and indistinct at first, soon loud and threatening, is heard outside; then Judas with a band of soldiers and servants from the chief priests and Pharisees enters the garden and betrays his Master with a kiss.

“Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?” Then to the crowd: “Whom seek ye?” “Jesus of Nazareth.” “I am He.” Peter strikes the High Priest’s servant with his sword. Jesus rebukes him and touches the servant, who falls at His feet and kisses the hem of His garment. Turning to the guard and the crowd Jesus delivers Himself up and is led away. The disciples all leaving Him flee, except John, who follows close to Jesus, but Peter follows afar off. Judas, now full of the horror of his sin, is left in the garden alone.

The second scene shows the courtyard of Pilate. On low stone steps leading upwards to the inner court Peter sits alone. At the rear are a large open window and a balcony; on the right Pilate’s judgment seat. To the left a crowd of Jews including many of the Scribes and Ancients are awaiting the arrival of the Governor and of the Prisoner, whose

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life is sought. A serving maid comes from the crowd and accosts Peter. "Thou also wert with Jesus of Nazareth." Peter is fierce in his denial. A second serving maid steps forward to repeat the accusation. Peter swears still more fiercely that he knows not the Man. A cry : "The Priests !" from without. The latter enter, the crowd bowing low. They harangue the crowd, telling what has just happened in the High Priests' Court, that Jesus has blasphemed, declaring himself to be the Son of God. The multitude cry out that He is deserving of death. Trumpets sound and, preceded by lictors and the guards, Pilate enters. Christ is called into the inner court. The crowd passes round with hostile cries and menaces. Pilate questions at first half mockingly ; then, wondering at Christ's calm demeanour and replies, he goes out to the priests, pleading that he finds no cause in the Man. But they will have blood, calling out that if Pilate let Him go, he is no friend to Cæsar. Give them rather Barabbas. Fearing a tumult Pilate sends Jesus to be scourged. As he ponders over a warning letter from his wife, the guards

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lead back Christ crowned with thorns, reed in hand, and clothed in purple. Pilate leads Him to the balcony. "Behold the Man."

A terrible sound of a crowd passionate and vengeful comes from without. Only on Pilate raising his hand for the third time does it cease. Then Barabbas is led to the window. "Release unto us Barabbas! Barabbas! Barabbas!" "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" Shouts: "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Shall I crucify your King?" "We have no king but Cæsar!" "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "What evil hath He done?" "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" Pilate calls for water and washes his hands. "I am innocent of the blood of this Just Man. Look ye to it." A shout, louder and more terrible than before, answers him: "Let His blood be upon us and upon our children."

The third scene shows the side of Calvary. Peter and others await the coming of the sad procession which is winding out of Jerusalem. Up the hill-side comes the sound of keening, and presently the women of

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Jerusalem, among them the three Marys, accompanied by the disciple whom Jesus loved, emerge on the slope. The Virgin turns to Peter. "O, Peter! O, Apostle! Hast thou seen my Bright Love?" Peter answers: "I saw Him even now in the midst of His foemen." She turns to the women: "Come hither, two Marys, till ye see my Bright Love." Then Mary catches sight of a form bent under a cross, staggering up the hill-side. She asks Peter: "Who is that noble Man beneath the Tree of Passion?" "Dost thou not know thy Son, O Mother?" Jesus meets her and comforts her: "Hush, O Mother, and be not sorrowful."

Turning to the keeners He bids them weep not for Him, but for themselves and their children. Blessing them He passes on to His death. Presently a shadow is flung across the hill as the cross is raised. The voices of the Chief Priests and Ancients are heard mocking, and the gentle replies of Jesus, the voices of the thieves, one mocking, the other beseeching, and Jesus' reply. After a space Jesus again speaks. This time with the Blessed Virgin and St. John: "Woman,

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behold thy Son. Son, behold Thy Mother." A pause. "I thirst." Another pause: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" A longer pause: "It is consummated." Then with a sigh: "Father, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit."

Lightning flashes and peals of thunder roll. Darkness spreads across the hill, and the loud, poignant, agonized keening of the women rises.

The audience which, slowly and without applauding, passed out of the Abbey on the two nights of the performance had much to think of, the Irish medium, strange to most of it, had not veiled but intensified the meaning and pathos of the story. Some of us, too, thought, though to many it may seem an irreverence, that our national and individual struggle was in ways a faint reflection of the Great One just enacted. Is it not so? The Man is crucified as the Nation, and the Soul moves slowly, falteringly, towards the Redemption.

Sgoil Eanna did much towards creating the tradition of acting and dramatic writing of which Mr. Colum speaks. In June 1912 we produced "An Rí," in the open air

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upon the banks of the river that runs through the Hermitage grounds. In Whitsuntide 1915 we produced "The Master" at the Irish Theatre, Hardwicke Street.

William Pearse took the part of Ciaran in the "Master," and the Abbot in "An Rí." Mr. Pearse wrote his "masterpieces to order," to quote his own jesting phrase, and with an eye upon special individuals for particular parts.

Pearse's visit to America in the early months of 1914, made a profound impression upon him. His brother conducted Sgoil Eanna in his absence. Weekly and minute bulletins were despatched from Sgoil Eanna to America all that time to the Headmaster, who insisted upon being furnished with a detailed account, not only of the school's progress, but of every boy in it. Indeed he made every effort to supervise those thousands of miles away. We welcomed him back with a magnificent demonstration from the roof of the square, grey imposing building, which is the Hermitage. Some of us lined the roof, waving the school banner and making the air resound with trumpet calls and the music of pipes. The

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rest of the school lined the avenue to greet him with the traditional Sgoil Eanna three shouts of welcome. The following is his message from America written in the midst of his lecturing campaign. It conveys a fine sense of the personality behind Pearse's words. In a similar spirit were his religious instructions, his daily comments upon discipline from his rostrum in the Study Hall morning and evening before prayers, his appeals to individual boys in his study. There was a strength in his every gesture, a quiet authority in his tone, a keen knowledge of every one of his students. He made no idle boast when he claimed to know each boy's character as well as he knew the Gaelic-speaking West and the literature of Gaelic chivalry. He could be severe upon occasion, but he rarely had necessity. Someone has written of Pearse that he had a power. This message is eloquent of the power he had in Sgoil Eanna:—

*To Sgoil Eanna: Greeting.*

You are all, I have no doubt, reassembled after the Easter Vacation and



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working hard. So many invitations poured in upon me to lecture and to tell the Americans what fine fellows you are that I was unable to get home, as I had hoped, in time to be in my place to welcome you back from your holidays. However, I shall be on the sea in a very few days from the time this reaches you, and in a week or so thereafter you will again hear my sonorous voice saying "Amac Lib," "Iompoð timceall," "In buir doort," "Ceapó é ro?" etc., etc. I have already promised to give you a special holiday in commemoration of my safe return and happy escape from sea-sharks and land-sharks. In the meantime, I want to appeal to you, and I do so most earnestly, to put all your heart into the work that remains to be done during the short month or six weeks that are left of the school year. Let every boy do his best. Let every boy do his best at his weak subjects especially. Do a six weeks' work that it will be a pleasure to yourselves to look back upon, whatever the results of the examination may be. Show what Sgoil Eanna can do. Remember you have a great reputation. You have a great reputation now even in

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America. You must live up to that reputation. It would be disgraceful to have an undeserved reputation.

Let every boy start right now, and not slacken until the word is given for "home" some fine day during the third week of June.

I do hope finally that you are making some effort to speak Irish.\* Remember that that rifle is still unwon. I want to give it away this summer, but it can only be given on condition that some boy wins it by a genuine effort to speak Irish.

Beannact cugaid anoir go bfeicid mé rith. Beir buaid cata agus corrairt a Sgoil Éanna!

Míre,

PATRICK MAC PIARAIS.

I can do no more here than refer to the internal organization of Sgoil Éanna. The words "the domestic arrangements are in the charge of ladies" has a world of meaning to any past student. Happily Mrs. Pearse and Miss Margaret Pearse are still alive so I shall not say here the good we

\* Typical of the critical spirit of Mr. Pearse's general addresses. On an average, every Sgoil Éanna student acquired a good working knowledge of Irish in a year!

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think of them save this : that their care and devotion have done as much as the efforts of the two whose loss they bravely bear to make the school the success P. H. Pearse has claimed it to be, to achieve the miracle he speaks of in the article quoted in the appendix : to make a school a large family rather than a dismal barracks, a lovable place rather than a hateful one.

What use indeed to write more in Sgoil Eanna's praise just now, or the things its Headmaster accomplished ? Only those who have had the rare privilege of working with him there could understand aright. Some of us were with him in his last fight, we had seen the beginnings, strivings, adventures and rejoicings of his greatest experiment. " Pearse is the soul of this," said one present while the Republican flag flew over Dublin buildings and the noblest thoroughfare in Europe mounted into ruins and ashes. While the street outside roared skywards in leaping and fantastic flames, which made every cobble-stone distinct, murmuring hideously and lapping the very clouds, inside a doomed building stood the Headmaster unmoved. A cordon of soldiery

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were closing slowly in and around. The deafening riot of noise which rifles, machine guns and artillery can produce rang in his ears. Upon him of all men in Dublin rested the weight of the huge adventure. Staring unflinchingly at defeat, he walked the last from the darkened resonant tottering house of flame down the bullet-swept streets, past the corpses that dotted the streets, past sombre alleys lighted by the flashes of machine guns to the house where Connolly lay wounded. There he stayed until he walked thence to surrender and die, the old expression of pride and defiance in his eyes—the last glimpse men had of the Headmaster of Sgoil Eanna. He has told us the highest thing a man may do is to serve. We, his students, have no greater praise for him than this: he showed us Ireland. Some day we hope to tell at greater length and more fittingly the history of his school.

“The ideal of a dreamer, this college!” says some one. Oh! never believe it! In this system interpenetrated with a lofty ideal, room was found for such practical subjects as carpentry and gardening for boys,

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needlework and cooking for girls, and ambulance and first aid for both boys and girls. And the boys and girls who were asked to be ready to emulate Emmet's or Anne Devlin's heroism, were sent into the National University and carried off first prizes in Classics or competed at the Feis Ceoil, and were awarded gold medals. Are we the less efficient in the practical affairs of life, in the study or in the workshop, in the marketplace or in the home for our possessing and trying to live up to some enkindling ideal?

DESMOND RYAN.



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### I

The letter given below is a letter Mr. Pearse wrote to thank some of the past pupils of Sgoil Ide for a birthday gift. I make no apology for quoting it in full without translating. Those who are likely to appreciate the letter will not complain. It is hardly within my province to deal with the story of St. Ita's College. That is a work for other hands. Founded 12th September 1910, the college continued until June 1912. An Irish secondary school for girls had long been considered by Mr. Pearse, but other projects occupied his attention until he moved St. Enda's to Rathfarnham :

SGOIL ÉANNA.  
RÁT PEARNÁIN.

ST. ENDA'S COLLEGE,  
RATHFARNHAM.

11 Samain, 1915.

A Cara,

Níl a fíor agam cad ba ceart dom a ráb leat-  
ra agus le Máire Buitín agus leir na cailínib  
eile cum buídeáir do gabáil ar ion búp.

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mbronntanair. Dar ndoig, o'fás rib san cainnt mé.  
Do bí iongnad an domain orm nuair tug mo mátair  
an bronntanar irtead maidin inoé, agus ir ar eigin  
o'féadar labhairt. Glac mo buideadar ó bun mo  
éiríde amac agus cuir i-n-iúl do na cailínib eile é,  
leó' toil.

Ir oílir na cáirde rib agus ní déanfaid mé  
dearmad oraib go deo ná ar cailínib agus  
máisirtheáraitib Sgoil Ioe. Ir breag ar fad an  
bronntanar tug rib dom agus ní féadfaid rib  
cuimniúad ar puo do b' úráiríge.

Beirid míle buideadar agus beannaict.

( Míre do cara go buan,

pádraic mac piaraís.

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### II

The article here reprinted appeared in "An Claidhbh Ruadh," a bilingual magazine, published by the Gaelic League in Belfast.

### ST. ENDA'S

I have been asked to write here something about St. Enda's College and its boys and masters. It is too early for me to make any "confessions." And I have had certain deep joys and certain keen disappointments at St. Enda's which I shall never "confess," at least to the public. Also, there have been humorous passages in the history of the past five years which would make excellent reading, but which to recount here and now would detract from the grave and decorous character that parents and the public expect in a headmaster. In the spacious leisure of a future when the Intermediate shall cease from troubling and the Department be at rest, I will write a school

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story whose incidents shall have all the wild improbability that only truth can have. The existence of St. Enda's itself is one of the most improbable things imaginable, and yet it is a fact.

Belfast Gaels will hear with interest that the first definite encouragement to me to start St. Enda's came from one of themselves. I sufficiently indicate whom I mean when I describe him as the dominant personality in Gaelic Belfast, and perhaps the strongest and sanest personality in the whole language movement. I remember that when I wrote round to my friends saying that I proposed to open near Dublin a school which should be more Irish in spirit than any school that had been opened in Ireland since the Flight of the Earls; which should be bilingual in method; which should teach modern languages orally; which should aim at a wider and humaner culture than other Irish secondary schools; which should set its face like iron against "cramming" and against all the evils of the competitive examination system, which should work at fostering the growth of the personality of each of its pupils rather than at forcing all

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into a predetermined groove; when, I say, I wrote all this to my friends, most of the answers that came back might be summed up in the word "Don't." From Belfast came the gallant message, "Do; and I will send you my boys." The next word of encouragement was from Buenos Aires—from the late William Bulfin, with a similar promise. And the third was from an illustrious member of the Catholic Hierarchy. All this is sufficiently improbable; and our subsequent history has been of a piece.

Three Ulstermen (giving Ulster its Irish, not its Anglo-Irish geographical boundaries) have shared with me the main brunt of the financial burden of St. Enda's; and one of these Ulstermen is a non-Catholic, while St. Enda's is a Catholic school. Improbable again. And three of my most valued colleagues in our actual teaching work have been Ulstermen by birth or adoption. Add to this that if I were asked to select the six most promising of our pupils at the present moment, I should have to name four Ulster lads among the six. Ulster again is supposed to be the "dour" province; but my experience of Ulster boys and Ulster men is

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that they have more of the Celtic gaiety than the boys and men of any other part of Ireland, and also that their gaiety is more joyous and less mocking than the gaiety of the South. I speak of Celtic Ulster—Donegal and the non-planted parts of the other counties.

It was very improbable that when a person who (although he had been a teacher all his life) was known chiefly as a journalist and secondarily as a lawyer, announced that he was about to open a school which should challenge the whole existing education system of Ireland, any pupils should be sent to him. Yet forty pupils rallied to St. Enda's on its opening day, and the number has increased in a steady ratio up to the present year. The time was in fact ripe for such an experiment, and it only remained to see whether the right people had taken it in hands. Several improbable things that have happened since go to show me that we were the right people. We have accomplished the miracle of making boys so love school that they hate to leave it. I do not think that any boy has ever come to St. Enda's who has not in a short time grown



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fond of it. It is not that we make things unduly easy for our lads: they work as hard in the study hall and on the games' field as it is healthy for any lads to work. I think that part of our success is due to the real comradeship that exists between boy and master. I mean not merely that we masters fraternise with the boys when off duty, but that we have put ourselves definitely into such a relationship with them that every boy is always sure that his point of view will be seen by the master and his difficulties sympathetically considered. And I have rarely found boys trying to evade punishment for faults committed; on the contrary, boys have many times come to me spontaneously, confessed faults, and asked to be punished. The reason is that they would consider it mean towards me and mean towards their companions to take shelter behind the excuse, "I wasn't asked who did it." Boys are proverbially honourable in their dealing with one another; our achievement has been to bring the masters within the magic circle, and thus give a new extension to "schoolboy honour."

It is improbable enough that the school

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whose main subject is the Irish language, and which leans rather to the "modern literary" than to the "classical" type of programme, should have gained the first Classical Entrance Scholarship in University College, Dublin; and it seems grotesquely improbable that we should have established a sort of "corner" in Kildare County Council Scholarships. But these things we have done. It was a comparatively easy matter for us to make our boys the best athletes of their age in Ireland, and to win and hold the Dublin championships in football and hurling; and this success prepared us for the innately improbable event that our captain was selected to captain the Leinster Colleges against Munster.

I think our performances of Irish and Anglo-Irish plays, and especially our Passion Play of last Easter twelvemonth—intended to be a triennial event and due again at the Easter of 1914—have meant something, not only in the development of our boys, but in the development of dramatic art in Ireland. As Mr. Padraic Colum has written of us, we have gone back to the beginning of

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drama instead of trying to transplant the full-grown art from an exotic soil.

Achievements such as these have made the first five years of St. Enda's College memorable, but after all our main success must be looked for in the characters and daily lives of our boys, for the teaching that does not affect conduct is only so much empty breath. So I hope that what Mr. Eoin MacNeill said of us three years ago will always remain true, that St. Enda's has been a success, not only in its classrooms and on its playing fields, but firstly and chiefly in the homes of its pupils.

*St. Enda's College, Rathfarnham,  
Summer 1913.*

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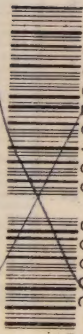
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